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THE GREAT EXAMPLE

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BY

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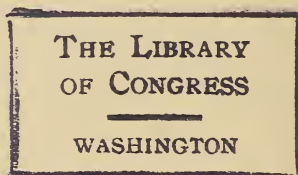
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TO THE
VERY REVEREND THE DEAN, THE FACULTY
AND THE
STUDENTS OF THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
NEW YORK

THE FOLLOWING ADDRESSES
ARE DEDICATED
WITH
GREAT RESPECT AND SINCERE AFFECTION
BY ONE
WHO WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THEM IN WORK
FOR SEVEN YEARS.

PREFACE.

THESE addresses would not have been published but for a promise made five years ago to some of the clergy of the Diocese of New York before whom they were first delivered, and the belief that there is still room for a book of Devotions to help Candidates for Holy Orders during the days immediately preceding their Ordination. Retreats for the Ember seasons, though happily common, are not universal, and there are not a few young men who, with the very best intentions to pass such a time seriously, find it difficult to know how they may employ it profitably. The aim of this little book is to supply their need ; it therefore contains not only addresses on the fourfold life of the Ministry, but outlines of meditation together with some devotions. The passage of Scripture selected for meditation is intended to suggest the teaching that follows in the address, and the devotions to gather it up in short petitions and acts of praise. So it is hoped that those unable to share in the blessings of a Retreat may find help in making some preparation by themselves for entering into the thoughts of the greatest day of their lives.

The forms in which the devotions are given are in

nearly all cases substantially the same as those followed on the Quiet Day in New York and in the Retreat at Albany nearly two years ago, but the addresses have, in such parts as seemed necessary for the sake of clearness, been amplified. The informal literary expression, for which some apology seems necessary, is in a measure due to the desire to preserve as far as possible their character as spoken addresses.

In conclusion, the Author desires to add that he is not unaware that in presenting so great a Subject, he runs considerable risk not only of belittling It by trying to unfold It, but also of marring Its majestic proportions by contemplating It so largely in the light of experience. The venture is made in reliance upon the judgment of those for whose opinion he entertains a high respect. It is not likely that the book is free from mistakes; but anything that is not in accord with the mind of the Church he desires by anticipation to fully and unreservedly retract.

The Author desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to the many authors from whom he has quoted, and also to the widow of the Rev. S. Kettlewell, by whose kind permission he has been allowed to make extracts from the valuable 'Meditations on the Life of Christ, by Thomas à Kempis—translated and edited by the Ven. Archdeacon Wright and the Rev. S. Kettlewell.'

THE FEAST OF EPIPHANY,
BEDE COLLEGE, DURHAM, 1897.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. THE VISION OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY	4
II. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE MAN"	
The Preacher	18
III. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE MAN"	
The Teacher	42
IV. THE LION OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE KING"	
The Royal Office	72
V. THE LION OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE KING"	
Characteristics of the Royal Spirit	104
VI. THE OX OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE PRIEST"	
The Priest in his Life towards God	126
VII. THE OX OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE PRIEST"	
The Priest's Office towards Man	158
VIII. THE EAGLE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE SEER"	
Characteristics of the Inner Life	186
IX. THE EAGLE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE SEER"	
Aids to the Inner Life	214

I.

THE VISION OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

MEDITATION.

The Retreat and its Blessings.

And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech ; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue ; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.—*St. Mark vii. 32-35.*

“*He took him aside*”—So Jesus is taking me aside
(a) from parish, friends, family cares, that I
The Retreat. may realize afresh His Presence. At first it seems awkward to be alone, even though it is with Him, for I do not see Him very clearly ; but I *must* get rid of this impediment in my speech, this confusion of mind and slowness of utterance which my people have noticed. I *must* get time to hear His Voice, which I have been so long without hearing. For my flock's sake, if not my own, I must go aside with Jesus and steadily contemplate Him by faith.

“*He put His fingers into his ears, and He spit, and*
(b) *touched his tongue*”—Yes ; something like
The Method. this He will do for me. Only instead of His fingers into my ears, His precious Body and Blood into my mouth. Instead of the outward sign of His life, His very Life itself ; instead of the touch, His indwelling Presence. Surely if the less effected so com-

plete a cure, the greater will not do less. Believe, then, O my soul. Open thy mouth wide and He will fill it.

"*He sighed*"—Yes ; this I know He does over my own sad condition and that of my people. If He has pity for me, have I none for myself? A deaf priest unable to preach plainly! What can be done with him? Show him the sorrows of Jesus and he will surely cry to be healed.

"*He saith unto him, Ephphatha*"—Oh, Lord Jesus, Thou good and gracious Physician, say this to me during this Retreat that I may hear Thy voice again and be able to speak plainly.

"*His ears were opened, . . . he spake plain*"—

(c) Yes ; so others have told me. They have
The Blessing. told how, as the Retreat continued, the Scripture, the Psalms, the Hymns seemed to be full of teaching ; and how they felt a new power of prayer. May it be so with me. "Lord, speak, for Thy servant heareth." "Lord, I believe ; help Thou my unbelief."

To be steadfast in staying "aside from the multitude,"
Resolution. and to contemplate Jesus Christ and Him only.

I.

THE VISION OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

Preparation for the Vision.

For five years Ezekiel had been waiting for a clearer knowledge of the mind of God. Called to a holy priesthood, filled with expectation of what that office would mean, he had as yet received no revelation which enabled him to see how he would exercise it. But they were years of rich experience, for, living as he did, some four hundred miles away from Jerusalem, among the captives, he was enabled to enter into their feelings, to understand their sorrows and complainings, and so to interpret to them the Vision when God might show it. He learned patience, sympathy, and faith.

It may be that some of us, though priests and exercising our office, have not yet learned in what particular direction our work is to lie. We, too, are waiting for a revelation of God's mind. We, like Ezekiel, have been led by the Spirit far from our homes and familiar faces, and are "among the captives," amongst those who are bound by traditional customs and class feelings and prejudices, which prevent our going forth in that freedom we desire.

And yet this time, which seems so largely barren, has been fruitful. We have become acquainted with things and people as they are, we have learned something of the nature of our work, we see what must be done though we know not yet how to do it. Let us not be in haste. Ezekiel had no vision till he was thirty years of age, and even of the Master Himself we read that He was thirty years of age when the heavens were opened and the Spirit as a Dove descended upon Him. It may be that now we shall see more clearly where and what our future work is to be.

Accompaniments of the Vision.

“The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel.” “The hand of the Lord was there upon him.”

The first phrase speaks of the objective character of the Revelation, the second of the Divine sympathy which enabled him to bear it. The Vision was not the outcome of a dreamy contemplation of religious subjects, nor an ecstasy which was the result of hard thinking, but a Divine interposition. Ezekiel remembered distinctly the year, the month, the very day when the Word of God “came expressly” to him. He remembered, too, the impression, as of the hand of some friend upon his shoulder bidding him look. It stirred every faculty within him. As the hand of the Lord roused the prophet Elisha when he sat moodily before the three kings not knowing what to say; as it quickened even the physical strength of

6 *The Vision of the Christian Ministry.*

Elijah so that he ran with extraordinary speed to Jezreel before the storm that was sweeping in from the sea ; as it awakened Daniel, fallen into a deep sleep, and prepared him to face the vision of things to come ; as it gave life to St. John when he lay at the feet of his Lord as one dead ; so it awakened and excited all the powers of Ezekiel, and he looked, expecting some great sight.

To us, too, may come some such experience. John Bunyan describes how in one great spiritual conflict with the Tempter the word of the Lord came so expressly to him that it was "even as if one had clapped me upon my back." And if we may not feel so vivid a realization of the Divine Presence as is there described, yet to us will come, it may be in the Meditation or in the Divine Food, a strong spiritual stimulus, an inrush of the power of the Holy Ghost, giving at once illumination and consolation.

The Vision.

At first "*a whirlwind,*" "*a great cloud,*" and "*a fire infolding itself.*" So Ezekiel endeavors to place before us that which he first saw. The words convey no distinct image, for none is intended. At first with us, as with him, there is confusion ; we seem to see nothing. Our mind is in a whirl ; we are swept by a storm of emotions ; stirred, awakened, and excited, and yet no one thought is clear. The only conviction is that we are in the presence of a Divine Person,

for out of the midst of our mental and spiritual confusion we see "eyes of bright brass" (this seems to be the meaning of the phrase "color of amber") reading us through and through.

But as Ezekiel looked and looked upon the face of God thus manifested, and his eyes became used to the brightness of that divine light, he saw that the Majesty of God was borne upon four living creatures, more human than anything else, and yet each having the likeness of a lion, an ox, and an eagle, as well as that of a man. There was much else that he was enabled to notice and which he has given us, for the development of which we have not time here. It is sufficient to consider the broad features of the Vision. And first let us note the quarter whence it came. Not from Jerusalem, as Ezekiel might have supposed, but from the north. Accustomed to the daily splendor of the Temple, its ceaseless worship, intercession, and sacrifice, it was natural for the prophet to suppose that the revelation of God was confined to that hallowed spot and those sacred ministries of high priest, priest, and Levite. He now learns that from the north, the quarter most to be feared, God manifests Himself.

We, too, cherishing naturally and rightly the splendid traditions and the chastened and delicate beauty of the Church's services, are tempted to feel that the revelation of God is confined to them; that only in the Liturgy, the Sacraments, and the varied Ministries of the Body of Christ can God be revealed, and we

8 *The Vision of the Christian Ministry.*

are therefore seriously depressed when we think of all those hindrances and limitations by which the Divine Revelation is confined and darkened. We are disheartened with the thought that large numbers, even of the citizens of Christ's Kingdom, are indifferent or hostile to that ministry which has been ordained to be the medium by which the Word of God is to be made known. This Vision gives us a wider conception of the Divine Ministry. All creation is seen to be carrying the message of God to mankind. "The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament sheweth His handywork." Our service is not so isolated, not so peculiar as it appeared. So far from it being exceptional to serve God, the Universe proclaims His service as its law. "Subject to vanity"¹ at present, and therefore not able to give so clear a witness as she would like, yet by her groans as well as by her smiles Nature testifies to "the eternal power and Godhead"² of her Creator so that men who refuse to accept her testimony are without excuse.

But though men have not the only part in God's service, though we are taught to invoke the mountains and hills, the seas and floods, the winds of God, the whales, the fowls of the air, the beasts and cattle, to praise the Lord, yet ministry is seen to be chiefly human. "This was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man." Men are the priests of creation; they utter intelligently and consciously all

¹ Rom. viii. 19-22.

² Rom. i. 20.

that Nature is trying to say. The eagle, the ox, and the lion are all summed up in man, who is not only their crown, but their spokesman. In spiritually minded ascetics who soar above the earth and mundane wants, in self-sacrificing and devoted priests who have laid down their lives for their brethren, in zealous and wise-minded rulers and kings who have spent their strength in making the world better ; in and by these—men of all lands and all tongues : a Gautama, a Socrates, a Confucius, and thousands whose names none know but He whose message they bore—God has made Himself known to the sons of men.

But their voices are difficult to explain, their utterances are uncertain, their movement hesitating. They need that which they themselves supplied to creation ; they need an Interpreter, and this God has supplied in His Church—the chosen few who are to represent the needs of their brethren before God, and bring back from Him that knowledge which is positive, certain, and clear. Here, again, we find that so far from this ministry being confined to the threefold order of the ministry, all the members of Christ have a share in it—"the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man"¹—and, again, in the Church we find the same types we found in mankind, only clearer and more sharply defined.

There are the seers, the mystics, the monks, nuns, and students, those who have lived apart from the world—a St. Bernard and a Tauler, a St. Catherine

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 7.

of Sienna, a Hooker—eagles living in the clouds and speaking of the mysteries of God.

There are the Patriarchs, Bishops, Priests, who have died for men—a St. Ignatius, a St. Augustine, a Patteson, and a Lowder—offering themselves as Phinehas did of old for the people, and standing between the quick and the dead.

There are the rulers, men who have founded kingdoms and shaped constitutions—a Louis of France, an Alfred of England, a Washington of America.

And there are also the Prophets, men gifted with utterance, governing by words, discovering men's hearts to themselves, discerners of the times—men like Chrysostom, Savonarola, Maurice, and Liddon; men like Wordsworth, Longfellow, Tennyson, and Browning.

All these, and many others, share our ministry and take their part in bearing along the ages the knowledge of the saving Presence of God.

And above them, above this firmament studded with stars, each differing from its fellow in glory, "the likeness of a throne," and "upon the likeness of the Throne the likeness as the appearance of a man"—of that Man in whom each finds his image and type, that One whose character needed to be set forth in a fourfold Gospel, depicting by the hand of St. Matthew His portrait as Prophet, by that of St. Mark His portrait as King, by that of St. Luke His portrait as High Priest, and by that of St. John His portrait as the Eternal Word made flesh, reveal-

ing the glory of the Father—that is the Vision, one surely full of comfort and strength. Separated as we are by our vocation, our dress, and even our language, moulded as it is, and sobered by the chastening influence of the daily use of the Divine Offices, we are apt to feel lonely, and, as we stand in some crowded throng of our countrymen, a little peculiar, as though we were the solitary bearers of the Divine message. It is not so; amongst those around us are many like-minded, though not called with our calling. And we, the priests of the Church, are to be for them what they are for the world of mankind and what Humanity is for the Universe. We, like our Divine Master, whose example we strive to follow, are to sum up their various ministries in our own. We are to be Prophets, Kings, and Seers, as well as Priests. Our Priesthood virtually contains within itself the Prophetic and Royal ministries, and is sustained by that of the Seer. We cannot resign any one of the three. If our life should be mainly that of the student or teacher, we shall need the authority of Kingship and the broad humanity of Priesthood to make it effective; or, again, if our life be chiefly spent in government, its rule is sure to be harsh and unsympathetic unless we are in touch with those we govern by the exercise of our Prophetic and Priestly ministries. We are strong in proportion as we are four-sided, weak in proportion as we are one-sided. It may be that as we study the outline of the Vision presented to us in the perfect life of the Son of Man, we shall see, as

Ezekiel saw, that our work is to be mainly prophetic, or it may be that we shall feel that our strength lies rather in a loving and wise care for individuals ; but in whatever direction the Divine leading points, we shall find our mission spoiled unless we make “ a full proof ” of every part of our ministry.¹

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 5.

DEVOTIONS.

Oh, how amiable are Thy dwellings, Thou Lord of Hosts ! My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into Thy courts ! My heart and my flesh cry out for the Living God ! For I have looked upon the Face of Thy Majesty, I have beheld Thy Glory. I would therefore dwell with Thee as long as I live.

But Thou callest for service and not simply for contemplation. Oh, how good it is to teach, and to baptize, and to rule, and to study the Divine Word ! How good to voice the inarticulate cries of Nature and the aspirations of mankind, to make all the earth praise Thee and sing unto Thee, so that all flesh may bless Thy holy Name, that every creature may serve Thee ! But who is sufficient for these things ? Alas ! not I, stained with many sins, enfeebled with repeated acts of self-indulgence ! But Thou, O Lord, who hast called me to this Ministry, wilt give me the grace to fulfil its duties. Thou wilt cleanse, purify, and strengthen me so that I may be Prophet and Priest, Ruler and Seer. Thou hast made Thy servant Thy Minister, and I am but a little child ; I know not how to go out or to come in. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people whom Thou hast chosen ; give, therefore, Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, a deep sympathy wherewith to pray for Thy people, and a wise mind that I may teach Thy people. And so make me to fulfil Thy Ministry after the glorious Pattern given to us in the Life of our great High Priest, Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose Name I ask these blessings.

II.

THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE MAN."

MEDITATION.

The Revelation of God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.—*St. John i. 1, 2, 14.*

1. "*In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God*"—Here is the basis of my preaching. Long before time began, in the far reaches of Eternity, the Invisible and Immortal God is expressed in the Son Who is eternally generated from Him; fully expressed for "the Word was God." Every inspiration, then, that I have is not the creation of my own mind or imagination, but the Revelation of the Word through the Spirit. It is a flash from the Uncreated Light. But see to it, O my soul, that as the Word is ever towards God, so thy face is ever towards the Word.

2. "*The Word was made flesh*"—Wondrous condescension! Unspeakable compassion! The Mind of God, Infinite and Incomprehensible, translated for us in human words and deeds by the Incarnation! With this before me how dare I shrink from the lowest depths of humiliation if thereby I learn how to make known the Word of God! Welcome fellowship with the outcast and poor, that through it I may learn the tongue of the

unlearned, and express the saving Gospel of Christ in simple language !

3. "*The Word dwelt among us*" became the true Shechinah, the very Shrine of the Eternal, so that the weary entering His Refuge found rest to their souls. Is my preaching a revelation of the abiding Christ ? Do men turn to my ministrations expecting, as well as hoping, to find Him there ? Have my words made it clear to them that the Church is the Body of Christ ?

I will seek more diligently the Face of God, I will try
Resolution. to walk in the light of His countenance, I
will be earnest in my daily meditation that
His Word may express itself through me.

II.

THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE MAN."

The Preacher.

All writers on the Gospels have noticed the resemblance they bear in their characteristic features to those aspects of service which are brought before us in the Vision of Ezekiel which we have just looked at. Art has still further emphasized the likeness, so that there are but few churches which have not, in stone, needlework, or glass, perpetuated the teaching. As we have admired the skill which has so strikingly expressed the prophetic conception, have we realized that not in stone or needlework, but in our lives, those four types of ministry must be wrought out ?

Perhaps there is some intended significance in that order of the Gospels which places that of St. Matthew first and that of St. John last. If we are right in following the interpretation of St. Jerome, which, in the West, has gained "almost universal currency," and assigning the "man" to St. Matthew, it is not difficult to see why this should be the first picture of the Divine Ministry to be set before us. Not only do

we feel that there must be preaching before there can be a Kingdom and a Priestly Service, not only did our great Leader begin His work by preaching, but even in the public mind the work of preaching is that which is primarily associated with the Minister. Large numbers of men have indeed gone no farther, unwisely supposing that if this ministry be ably fulfilled they need no other. Still, the emphasis laid upon preaching, though often to the disparagement of the offices of Kingship and Priesthood, is not misplaced, for it has the support not only of Scripture, a large part of which is taken up with sermons and letters of prophets, but of Christ Himself, who in the mind of His contemporaries was preëminently a Preacher, *the* Prophet, spoken of long before by Moses. And here, before going further, it may be well to explain what we understand by the word Prophet. We take it in two senses, that expressed by the Hebrew נָבִיא (nâvee) and that by the Greek προφήτης. The former word, which appears to be derived from a root meaning "*to bubble over*," indicates the Prophet as one charged with divine thoughts which he cannot refrain from expressing, as the writer of Psalm XLV. speaks of his bubbling over with the glorious subject which God had put in his heart. The latter rather signifies one who speaks for another—God's spokesman or interpreter. The consideration of what is involved in the Greek term we shall postpone to the next address, simply occupying ourselves for the present with that conception which is certainly primary, that

of inspiration. It may be convenient to divide what we have to say into four parts : (a) The Call. (b) The Faith. (c) The Labor. (d) The Power.

(a) *The Prophet's Call.*

We need spend no time in proving that Christ is the Prophet, the Divine נביא. He, as St. Matthew tells us (xiii. 35), fulfilled the words foretold of the Messiah that He should not only open His mouth in parables, but declare (literally, bubble up, boil over) hard sentences of God. He speaks because He must speak. Being the very Word of God, the Divine Word is in His heart "as a burning fire shut up in His bones, so that He is weary of forbearing and cannot stay" (Jer. xx. 9). And yet He does stay year after year, even for thirty years, till the call of His Father is heard in the summons of the Baptist. He does stay, though He knows His ministry of preaching will be of the shortest, barely three years. This Self-restraint will appear the more remarkable if we suppose with some that when He went up to the Temple for the first time, at the age of twelve, He received not only a larger conception of the work of Redemption than had been possible before, considering the perfect Humanity of His human mind, but also a new Divine impulse. But here we touch a mystery before which silence is the most fitting attitude, and neither the narrative nor our admiration of our Lord's patient waiting demands anything

more than that the occasion of seeing His Father's House for the first time with human eyes supplied its own inspiration.

The return to the cottage at Nazareth has often been noticed as a singular illustration of filial obedience ; but how can we speak of His silence when He reached it ! Only a little imagination is necessary for us to realize how formal and barren the weekly teaching at Nazareth was ; how dry, dull, and dead it must have seemed to the Life as He sat and listened to it ! And a recollection of that scene which St. Luke gives us (iv. 29) on the occasion of His first sermon there will at once remind us how great was the need of living teaching. How impatient even a saintly prophet would have been when he measured the crying necessity with the manner in which men feigned to supply it ! And yet for eighteen years, for nearly a thousand Sabbaths, He sat as a patient listener, with the sorrows not of Nazareth only, but of a world, on His heart ! What an illustration of the greatly needed warning of St. Paul, "The spirits of the prophets are subject unto the prophets !" But when the call was heard He at once answered it, and electrified even a world taken captive by the powerful preaching of the Baptist with words spoken "as never man spake."

From His example, then, we learn that neither an ardent love of souls, nor a knowledge of that which will save them or of their sore need, is of itself sufficient for so great an undertaking as the work

of a prophet. There must be a Call. So we are asked before we are sent, "Do you think you are truly called?" Granted that you have what is indispensable—a love of souls; granted that you have a firm conviction of the certainty of those truths you must preach—are there any indications that the time has come for the exercise of your ministry? The Baptist's preaching summoned Christ from the seclusion of Nazareth. What voice has persuaded you to leave the privacy of your own home and come before men as a Prophet of the Lord? Is it that of your Bishop bidding you tarry no longer, that of some devout servant of God, like Ananias, telling you that the time is come when you must give your witness for Christ and His kingdom?¹ Or is it some spiritual movement, the banding of clergy and workers together for foreign service, which you feel impelled to join?² All or any of these may be indications of the voice of God saying to you as to Amos, "Go prophesy unto My people" (Amos vii. 15). It will be your steadfast assurance of this that can alone give you courage to meet its difficulties.

(b) *The Prophet's Faith.*

Our Master and Leader not only points by His example the necessity of a call, but, further, the necessity of a patient, waiting faith. Faith is the attitude of one waiting upon another; of one who originates

¹ Acts ix. 15, 16.

² Acts xiii. 2.

nothing and initiates nothing, but whose whole life is one of reception. This, strange though it seems to us when we think of His perfect Godhead, is the life of Christ. He lives "by the Father" (St. John vi. 57). He is ever the Eternal Son, and "the Son can do nothing of Himself" (St. John v. 19). But this mysterious aspect of our Lord's life comes out in a still more striking way when looked at in the light of His own words about His Preaching. Here, in the estimate of the world, a man is nothing if he is not original, but our Lord, "the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 24), disclaims all originality.

"My doctrine is not Mine but His that sent Me" (St. John vii. 16).

"As My Father hath taught Me I speak these things" (St. John viii. 28).

"I speak that which I have seen with My Father" (St. John viii. 38).

"I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him" (St. John viii. 26).

Yes, "the Word was God"; but also "the Word was towards God" (St. John i. 1). His Face ever set that way, His Ear "wakened morning by morning to hear as the learned" (Isa. l. 4). So, too, He is described as "the Faithful Witness" (Rev. i. 5), speaking of that which He had seen and heard and confining Himself strictly to it. So His Preaching is not a clearly reasoned out argument—it may be said He never argues—but rather a description of something seen, as in the Parables, or a testimony to

something heard, as in the denunciations of the Pharisees and the reproaches of the Jews. And this attitude of faith which He claimed for Himself He also claimed for His disciples. "*We speak,*" He said to Nicodemus, "that we do know and testify that we have seen."¹ Hence the certainty of the Apostolic preaching. They did not speak as though they were making probable guesses at the Truth, but as men who were as certain of the truth they taught as of their own existence. People seem to miss this characteristic in modern preaching. So much has been well said and written about the intellectual side of sermon *preparation* that the attitude of faith in preaching has been somewhat lost sight of. Bishop Phillips Brooks, however, speaks clearly enough. "The matter of Christian Preaching," he writes in his lectures, "must be a message given to us for transmission, but yet a message which we cannot transmit until it has entered into our own experience and we can give our own testimony of its spiritual power."

So, too, another writer: "We must have seen and felt in the study before we speak in the congregation."

So John Owen says: "No man preaches his sermon well to others if he doth not preach it to his own heart."

So the Bishop of Durham: "Be real, do not teach beyond your experience, hold your tongue rather than say more than you believe."

¹ St. John iii. 11.

So, too, the Bishop of Newcastle has said that "no one could preach with power unless he had realized that he spoke as the recipient of a revelation which, not in the abstract, but as a matter of personal experience, he was to communicate to others."

Two difficulties at once occur to the mind. If this be so, then it is plain, in any case during the first ten years of our ministry, that we must be limited in the subjects on which we can speak. Yes, for *preaching*, but not for *teaching*. We teach all that the Church gives us to teach, but we preach only that which we ourselves know. For the present we say no more, as the distinction will be naturally dwelt upon in the second division of the subject. But this limitation should not distress us. "Do not be afraid to acknowledge," writes the Bishop of Ripon, "that there are some matters which as yet are beyond your range. It requires some courage to confess this, but if truthfulness be our rule, there may be times when this course will be the only one open to us." Let us rather recognize its necessity, for it is surely true that in preaching, into which feeling largely enters, we imperil any truth the spiritual value of which we are not ourselves convinced. Our people quickly gather whether, for example, in our argument for belief in the Grace of the Sacraments or our Lord's atoning work, we really feel that which we are stating.

Another difficulty which this view presents is that involved in the choice of a subject for our Sunday's

sermon. The temptation to choose instead of to seek what may be given is sometimes almost irresistible. We feel as though we should be wasting time in seeking God's message elsewhere than in the Epistle or Gospel for the Sunday. And yet such a formal method is nothing less than the abdication of the preacher's office for that of the teacher. It is essential to the work of the former that it should be characterized by spontaneity and freedom.

"If any one inquire of me, 'How shall I obtain the most proper text?' " writes one who exercised an extraordinary spiritual influence over the mind of the great middle class, "I should answer, 'Cry to God for it.' " His own experience he relates in the following striking words :¹

"We tarry at Jerusalem till power is given. I confess that I frequently sit hour after hour praying and waiting for a subject, and that this is the main part of my study. Much hard labour have I spent in manipulating topics, ruminating upon points of doctrine, making skeletons out of verses and then burying every bone of them in the catacombs of oblivion, sailing on and on over leagues of broken water till I see the red lights and make sail to the desired haven. I believe that almost any Saturday in my life I make enough outlines of sermons, if I felt at liberty to preach them, to last me for a month, but I no more dare use them than an honest mariner would run to shore with a cargo of contraband goods. These flit before the

¹ "Lectures to My Students," by C. H. Spurgeon, p. 90.

mind, one after another, like images passing across the photographer's lens, but until the mind is like the sensitive plate which retains the picture, the subjects are valueless to us. Wait for the elect word, even if you have to wait within an hour of the service."

It may be said that Mr. Spurgeon's experience is no guide for us, as he was without our Prayer Book and without that Church instinct which leads us to feel with the Church in her appointed weekly messages. But it should be remembered we are not basing our teaching upon his words, but only using them as an illustration of that faith which seems to many to be so wanting in sermons. "These young men," said a sister of the Church who has had a somewhat large experience in listening to sermons, "seem to be without that sense of a message to deliver which is so characteristic of ——," naming the Rector of one of the most prominent churches in New York. It may be that on some Sundays all that we can do is to teach; we have no message to deliver. If that be the case, let us recognize the fact, and not attempt a sermon when all we can give is an instruction. Or, it may be that on some occasions we shall have to wait a long time till the fire kindles, and then, under its stimulating warmth, write far into the early morning. Let us not fear to give up rest and strength for that inspiration which is not only life to our people, but life to ourselves. Let me give a simple illustration of its power.

Lady Martin describes how Bishop Patteson hav-

ing promised to preach in one of the churches in Auckland, sat down on the Wednesday before the Sunday to make his preparation. The subject was chosen, the work in fair progress, when, to her astonishment, she saw "sheet after sheet, which had been written in his neat, clear hand as though the thoughts flowed on without effort, flung into the fire. 'I can't write,' was said again and again, and the work put by for another day. At last on Saturday morning he walked up to the parsonage to make his excuses. Happily, Dr. Maunsell would not let him off, so on Sunday the Bishop, without any notes or sermons, spoke to us out of the fulness of his heart about the Mission Work, of its encouragements and its difficulties." The effect produced was indescribable and ineffaceable, and no one who heard it could doubt that that was the message God had given him to speak to the people.

This witness might be multiplied. The writer himself well remembers the extraordinary power of an address given to clergy by a great preacher who introduced it by saying that he should not give what he had prepared but what he had received that morning during the celebration of the Eucharist. When we hear such we feel that prophets are still amongst us, and, further, that "Prophecy is the supreme want of the age." If it be asked where the prophets gain their message, it may be answered that "in the secret of God's Presence, under the guidance of the fellowship-giving Spirit, by prayer and

meditation, through self-emptying and self-effacement, they will see that sight, and hear those voices, and gain the germs of that personal holiness which will prove a lasting strength for their after-ministry of preaching. ‘*Visio Dei virtus hominum.*’ ”¹

(c) *The Prophet's Labor.*

This “*faith*” by which the message is received is not the only necessity for a successful fulfilment of the Prophetic Office. There have been indeed many masters in the life of faith who have yet failed to impress their message upon the minds of the people. Like those who spake with tongues in the early Christian assemblies, they have moved men by their devotion rather than by their words ; they needed an interpreter.

Turning to Him whose example we place before us as our model, we find this witness, “the common people heard Him gladly.” That which He had received from the Father He made plain to the people. This He was enabled to do because He knew and loved them. Living as one of themselves for thirty years, acquainted with all their ways, interested in all their pursuits, He was enabled to clothe the divine thought in a dress familiar to His hearers. And yet, whilst His preaching was essentially popular, it was, we need hardly say, never wanting in that

¹ “A Few Thoughts on the Best Methods of Preparation for the Work of the Preacher,” by Rev. Herbert James.

dignity which the subject demanded. The reverence due to the majesty of Divine Truth was not only preserved, but deepened. We cannot conceive of such a condescension as would degrade the truth to the level of His hearers. But with this reserve how freely He draws upon the life He knew for illustrations! None could be wearied with sermons often thrown into the form of simple stories which had for their coloring and background the circumstances and events of their own daily life. All would have the opportunity of understanding truths which were pointed by allusions to ploughing, sowing, and reaping, to fishing and commercial pursuits, and explained by such simple objects as coins and pearls, wine-skins and leaven, lamps and lamp-stands. The shepherd with the lost sheep in his arms, the bride with her recovered heirloom, the father banqueting his prodigal son, must have been irresistibly fascinating to those who were accustomed to hear dry dissertations on some unimportant point of the Mosaic Law. But all this meant labor which our Lord willingly bestowed. Though He always saw the Father's Face and heard His words, He never lost sight of the habits of the people He taught. His quick observation noticed even the games of the children and how they were spoiled by a churlish want of sympathy. And what He saw He treasured up that He might draw His hearers with "the cords of a man." "It was as man that Christ led men to God. No real leadership of the people except that which comes as

the leadership of the Incarnation came by a thorough entrance into the lot of those one has to lead."

So, too, with us. "Without a study of men our knowledge of God is largely barren. A physician may be a perfect chemist, he may have mastered all the remedies God has given, but *cui bono* unless he have studied disease, its causes and complications? The streets and homes of a great town are the bookshelves for the knowledge of man, the people are our living volumes. And if we fail to study them reverently and lovingly, all our printed books will be hard to understand, and our preaching, however eloquent, will beat the air. Among the hearts of our parish we learn, too, the language of the people and all that underlies language. We grow to think alongside of them, to understand the thoughts they cannot express."¹ Yes, the vision of God is given that we may tell others what we have seen. And it is our part, when we have received, to see that it is properly expressed. As the missionary in a foreign land is always seeking to know not only the language but the thought of his people, and only gains it after much labor, so we, too, must familiarize ourselves not only with their outward life, their business, their trades, and their homes, but with the way in which they look at things. At first we shall make but slow progress, learning a word here and there, but not the grammar; but afterwards, with practice, we shall be able to make a fair translation.

¹ "The Parish Priest of the Town," the Bishop of Truro.

It is not easy. Mr. Spurgeon probably found it less difficult than we should, and yet he says, "Go up to his level if he is a poor man, go down to his understanding if he is an educated one. There is more going up in being plain to the illiterate than there is in being refined for the polite. At any rate, it is the more difficult of the two and most like the Saviour's mode of speech." "I preached early to villagers," writes William Jay, "and long experience teaches me what is required in addressing them. The minds of rustics are not inaccessible, but you must take the trouble to find the avenues to them." Nothing for the preacher can take the place of frequent intercourse with his people, for "he is the best preacher who has the best knowledge of human nature, not of the philosophy of mind studied in the abstract, but of the wants, the susceptibilities, the temptations, the warnings, the shifts, of individual minds in regard to religion."

(d) *The Prophet's Power.*

We have considered three important elements in that part of the prophet's work expressed in the word נְבִיא. They are concerned with the preparation. We now look at the power behind the work and present with it to its close. We ask what is the secret of that indefinable power "which may be felt rather than described or analyzed; which resides in or permeates a man's whole circle of activities;

which cannot be localized, cannot be identified exclusively with one of them; . . . which is traced, perchance, in the very expression of the countenance, yet the countenance is too coarse an organ to do it justice; which just asserts its presence, but its presence is too volatile to admit of being seized and measured; brought by art or language fairly within the compass of our comprehension"—that power, all too rare, which is sometimes spoken of under the name of unction?

If we ask Him, our Leader and Example, whether here, too, we may find guidance, whether there is any secret power in His life which we may share with Him, He points us to what is recorded of His first sermon in Nazareth. When He returned to His own home as a Prophet of a great and increasing reputation, as one able to work signs and wonders, His old companions expected to see some exhibition of His miraculous gifts or at least some assertion of personal authority. He would stand forth amongst them, they thought, as one whose abilities and gifts reflected credit upon their town. But, on the contrary, the first words disclaim any original power. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor . . . to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Whatever disappointment may have been felt at the choice of His text, yet so manifest and perfectly evident was it to all that He stood forth as its personal embodiment, that "the eyes of all were

fastened upon Him." Wherever this new power is revealed it at once arrests attention. The unction of the Holy Ghost compels, for a time at least, the homage of man's instinctive reverence.

It would be impossible to set forth with any clearness the relation of the Holy Ghost to the Incarnate Son, nor is it necessary. We need only to be reminded of His perpetual Presence with our Lord in His Ministry of Preaching and of the consequent necessity of *our* fellowship with Him. For, as Canon Newbolt says, "if we are ever to get out our message, if we are ever to do our work in the world outside, the Holy Spirit must help us to do it. For . . . here is the only Force which has ever been able successfully to grapple with the power of the passions."¹ So, too, in the same spirit, Bishop Lightfoot asks, "What claims do the most brilliant mathematical faculties or the keenest scholarly instincts give to a man to speak with authority on the things of the Spirit? Are we not told, on authority before which we bow, that a special faculty is needed for this special knowledge; that eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard; that only the Spirit of God—the Spirit which He vouchsafes to His sons—knoweth the things of God? . . . Believe it, this spiritual faculty is an infinitely subtle and delicate mechanism. . . . Nothing—not the highest intellectual gains—can compensate you for its injury or its loss."

But for this there must be the preparation of a life

¹ "Speculum Sacerdotum," p. 128.

and the immediate preparation of the last few hours before preaching. There must be a continuous, ceaseless development of what has been called the spirit faculty, which in the ordinary man is spoken of as his conscience, and in the true Christian as spiritual-mindedness; and beside this, which is the ground of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost, there must be a brave exclusion from the immediate preparation of all that will lead our hearers to think more of the preacher than his subject. The brilliant passage which pleased us so well, the striking anecdote, the forcible illustration, these must be remorselessly cut out unless we conscientiously feel that they are necessary for the subject; for we cannot at one and the same time rely upon them and upon the Holy Ghost. They are as much out of place as Saul's beautiful armor was with David. So, too, as regards those coarser helps which men will sometimes use—the quiet smoke, the glass of wine. These are well enough for the political speaker. He may naturally rely upon his favorite stimulant to give him quietness and confidence; for he does not seek to touch the hidden, secret springs of conduct, but merely to persuade men from one opinion of a question to another. The Prophet, on the other hand, who is pleading with men to give up what they most like and to take up what they most fear, finds all these carnal weapons rather hindrances than helps. He goes to his work conscious of “weakness, fear, and much trembling,” and puts aside the

enticing words of man's wisdom lest the faith of his hearers should stand in the wisdom of men rather than in the power of God. And he finds that he is sometimes obliged to deny the body in order that the coarser parts of his nature may not obscure the message that is seeking to find an entrance. One who was present well remembers Archbishop Benson excusing himself to his hostess for his light breakfast on the ground that he was going to preach. And of "General" Booth it is said that he has given up all kinds of sweets, a food he greatly enjoys, in order that he may find fuller freedom in speaking. With such, whether they speak from manuscript or not, we feel we are in the presence of spiritual power. Men may not like what is said, may complain of its unpractical character, but they are struck with the earnestness and spirituality of the tone, and return home wishing perhaps that they could believe as the preacher evidently does. One practical suggestion in conclusion. If this grace of unction is to be ours, it must be sought diligently in prayer, and no words are more suitable than those of the ancient hymn, the "Veni Creator." Dr. Liddon quotes with warm approbation the following suggestion: "If you make it a rule to say sincerely the first verse of the Ordination Hymn every morning without fail, it will in time do more for you than any other prayer I know of, except the Lord's Prayer," and adds, "Perhaps fifty years hence, in another sphere of existence, some of us will be glad to have acted on his advice."

DEVOTIONS.

(From "*Meditations on the Life of Christ*," by Thomas à Kempis.)

O my soul, bless the Lord for His Holy Example in the Ministry of Prophesying !

I bless and give Thee thanks, O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou good Shepherd and faithful Guardian of Thy sheep, for Thy loving care, for Thy salvation of souls, and for Thy burning desire to proclaim to the world the glad tidings of God's Word.

O sweet Jesus ! with what diligent care didst Thou go about the villages and streets, the towns and fenced cities, to convert sinners, to heal the broken-hearted, and to grant forgiveness to the truly penitent ! I praise and magnify Thee from the very depths of my heart, for Thy comforting doctrine, and for Thy fervent preaching throughout all Galilee and Judæa, and for Thy glorious renown, proclaimed far and wide among the Gentile nations.

O Lord, in Thee the fountain of Eternal Wisdom, the Light of Life, and the fulness of all sweetness abound and endure forever ! "Incline therefore my heart to Thy testimonies." Open mine ear to the words of Thy mouth. "Turn away mine eyes lest they behold vanity, and quicken Thou me in Thy way."

Psalm cxix. 97-104.

Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent.

Collect after the Veni Creator in "The Ordering of Priests."

III.

THE PROPHEPIC OFFICE OR THE MINISTRY
OF "THE MAN."

MEDITATION.

The Office and Work of a Prophet.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest : for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways ; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God ; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.—*St. Luke i. 76-79.*

"Thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest" (1) —So of me, as of John the Baptist, these
The Call. words were said by the Holy Ghost, unless my call were only a fancy, which God forbid. Yes ;
"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee . . . and ordained thee a prophet." Long before I could speak, even before the Cross was marked on my brow in Holy Baptism, my work in life was chosen. So He chose the particular age and country in which I should be born, my parents, my school, my friends, my college ; *all*, that I might be able to praise Him in the "goodly fellowship of the Prophets." Consider, my soul, into how high a dignity and to how weighty an office and charge thou art called !

"To prepare His ways"—He seeks to come and take (2)
The Work. possession of His kingdom. The deep valleys must be filled in with the knowledge of His love, the lofty and proud mountains and hills must be brought low by repentance, the crooked paths

must be made straight by a clear denunciation of the hidden things of dishonesty, the rough places must be made smooth by gentle and wise counsels, for the King is coming. "Lift up thy voice, then, thou Prophet of the Highest."

"To give knowledge of salvation unto His people for the remission of sins"—To make all men know that there is a deliverance in Jesus Christ from the paralysis of sin, the tyranny of bad habits, the shame of an unquiet conscience; that there is an entrance into the deep Peace of God which passeth all understanding.

Ah, how I have wandered from this plain, simple duty, giving peace where there was no peace and moral precepts instead of saving truths!

"The tender mercy of God whereby the Day Spring
(3) *from on high hath visited us"*—How
The Ground. severe a task lies before me! How is it possible to execute it? Only by resting on the assurance of the Divine compassion and tenderness; only by returning again and again to the certainty of the historic fact that the Day Spring has visited us. My prophetic work rests on a Fact, the Love of God testified by the Incarnation of His only begotten Son.

To believe afresh in the dignity of preaching; so to
Resolution. preach that Christ may be glorified and men be led to feel the power of the remission of sins.

III.

THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE MAN."

The Teacher.

We have spoken of that side of the prophetic work which is expressed by the Hebrew נָבִיא, that side which is characterized by preaching rather than teaching, that which is chiefly illustrated by the work of the prophets of the Old Testament. We now turn to consider the work which is expressed by the Greek προφήτης, a word which we are told properly means "one who speaks for another, especially one who speaks for God and interprets His will for man." Now, though this word of course includes that of preaching, yet its primary signification, as well as that description of it which St. Paul gives in the Epistle to the Corinthians, suggests, if it does not directly imply, something more formal and less spontaneous, something more deliberate and less urgent and vehement. "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification";¹ *i. e.*, to the building up of character, a work requiring patience and time. So, again, whilst preaching is certainly

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

one great and effective means for influencing and converting the unbeliever, the prophesying St. Paul speaks of "serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe."¹ Its chief purpose is that "all may learn and all may be comforted."²

It is not easy now to discriminate clearly and fully between these two duties; so much of teaching is preaching, and, *vice versa*, much of preaching is teaching. And yet in mission work the two are sharply distinguished, the sermon having quite a different character from that of the instruction which follows it. Perhaps we may fairly say that in preaching, the element of persuasion is the dominating one; in teaching, that of instruction; in the one the preacher seeks to persuade the will, in the other to convince the mind. The Scripture recognizes both. Our Blessed Lord taught as well as preached (St. Matt. xi. 1); so, too, His disciples (Acts v. 42). It is possible that in the first days, as the gifts necessary for the one or the other were developed, there were some who confined themselves to preaching and became "evangelists" (Eph. iv. 11), as others gave themselves up to teaching and became "teachers." But this useful division was no longer everywhere possible when the work multiplied; and as all congregations of believers needed both ministrations, priests were obliged to teach as well as preach. The consequence of this was that the distinctive characteristics of these really separate functions became lost, and sermons became

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 31.

instructions and instructions sermons. In our own branch of Christ's Church it has been said that though "the cry of the time is for more effective preaching, the need of our time is more effective teaching."¹

If we are inclined to believe that there is more truth in the cry of the times than the writer credits it with, it is not on the ground that the Church has too much effective teaching. There can be no question that our people do need to be taught with increasing clearness the great doctrines of the Faith, but it is equally clear that they need from time to time, much more frequently than once in five years, as is suggested by the periods marked for holding a mission, to be stimulated and braced up by such effective preaching as is characteristic of a mission. The average Anglican sermon, whether preached in England or America, is an instruction rather than a sermon. Its aim is rather to instruct the congregation in some ethical or doctrinal truth than to persuade them to practise it. It is usually singularly wanting in the power of a strong appeal. There is little or no attempt to stir the emotions—little or no suggestion of a struggle on the part of the preacher with unwilling minds. The opening and the close are alike calm and deliberative. The teaching is given step by step, line by line, precept by precept, quietly, orderly, and clearly, and the spirit running through it is that of the words "He that hath ears

¹ Rev. Herbert James: "A Few Thoughts on the Best Methods of Preparation for the Work of the Preacher."

to hear, let him hear." Such teaching has not been without its effect. Anglican Churchmen are, we believe, characterized by just those qualities which we should expect such teaching to produce. They are morally stronger and doctrinally sounder than any other Christians; but is there not a want of zeal, activity, and missionary enthusiasm which some small sects have in larger measure? And, if so, is not this partly due to the lack of inspiration and stimulus in our sermons and addresses? Sectarianism will, we believe, always have a place amongst us so long as the cry for "effective preaching" is only partially answered.

But whilst we admit this we are far from saying that there is no occasion to lay stress on the necessity of "effective teaching." We need "teachers" as well as "evangelists." And we believe that as this need is more widely recognized, we shall find that the Church will be as careful to train her clergy in "didactics" as she has been in "dogmatics." Churches will be as closely associated with seminaries as model schools are with training colleges, and opportunity will be given to the candidate for Holy Orders to learn practically under good guidance how to catechise, instruct confirmation candidates, and conduct Bible classes.

In all this she will find her continuous inspiration in Him, the great Teacher of mankind, for it is needless to say that all, and more than all, we hope to find in a good teacher we find in Him. Is it "an ample

and accurate knowledge of the thing taught"? This of course He, the Truth, the very Word of God, necessarily had. Is it sympathy? No one ever taught with such infinite compassion for his scholars as He did, nor was there any so patient with dulness or ignorance. Is it the power of description, of illustrating an abstract truth with such pictures as the unlearned can understand? The Parables are a perpetual witness to this.

There is the same perfection in the method of His teaching. Whilst all is orderly and systematic and so easily remembered, yet it is never so formal as to be dull. Again and again the story is lighted up by a direct appeal such as appears in the Parable of the Vineyard in which our Lord seems to pause for answer, "What therefore shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them?" And when He Himself answers for them, they cry out, "God forbid!" showing how deeply the teaching had gone home.

But a whole book might be written on our Lord as Teacher, His principles and methods. We shall not attempt anything further than the consideration of those two essentials of good teaching which we are told marked His ministry, and the spirit which permeated it:

The first, the authority with which it was invested. "He taught as One having authority and not as the Scribes" (St. Matt. vii. 29).

The second, the love of the truth. "We know that Thou art true and teachest the way of God in truth.

Neither carest Thou for any man, for Thou regardest not the person of men" (St. Matt. xxii. 16).

The spirit that marked it. His sympathy.

(1) *The Prophet's Authority.*

First, His authoritativeness. "He taught them as One having authority and not as the Scribes." This was what men said one to another as they tried to describe that which struck them most in the manner of His speaking. This authority was twofold. (a) The authority of mission. (b) The authority of the message.

(a) *The Authority of Mission.*

We think it strange that the very Word of God, of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made, should refer to Another rather than to Himself for the truth of His words and actions, that He should come before men in the Name of Another rather than His Own Name. And yet this was His invariable practice. When the Jews publicly challenged His authority, asking Him by what authority He cleansed the Temple, He did not reply, as He might have done, "By My own, for I am Lord of the Temple," but referred them to the Authority of the Father, with which He was plainly invested by the testimony of the Baptist, whose commission they must either recognize as divine or ignore to their own great danger. So, too, when

they questioned His teaching, He replied by saying, "My teaching is not Mine, but His that sent Me." He knew that this constant reference to Another as His witness was disagreeable to men who were accustomed to receive honor one of another, and therefore could not understand the virtue of humility; but the attitude of deference and ready obedience to a divinely commissioned Prophet was essential to faith, whilst the pleasure they took in listening to any one who would stand forth in his own name was one that it was impossible for Him to encourage. (St. John v. 43-44).

It is true that now and again there flashed forth from His countenance an authority which overawed His enemies and caused them to fall backwards, but this He rarely used; His Father's Name, His Father's Authority, were always prominently forward.

(b) The Authority of the Message.

This great Authority with which our Lord was invested was never arbitrarily used. It never gave its support to any truth that failed to carry with it its own authority. And herein it differed from the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees. They had an authority, that of the Elders of the Church, as they would have said in the language of to-day, and in the name of that authority they asked why Christ allowed His disciples to break the Church tradition of washing before eating, of strictly ob-

serving the Sabbath. But men felt that authority was a bondage, first, because it was human, being founded on the passing opinion of men rather than on the unchangeable Word of God ; secondly, because it was urged in support of trifling ceremonies which made no appeal to the conscience. Men felt as they heard it presented to them that it was no real authority, for it carried no conviction with it, neither in the tone of the voice that pressed it nor in the subject in behalf of which it was urged. The Authority of Christ was entirely different. Whether men liked it or not, they felt compelled to respect it. They stood either silent and abashed before it, or they welcomed it with the feeling that “ never man spake like this man.” It was as refreshing as the other was wearisome, as majestic as the other was puerile.

Now, the Prophet who would teach as his Master taught must teach as one “ having authority ” ; in other words, as one commissioned as a herald sent to announce good tidings or as an ambassador charged to explain the conditions of peace. He always remembers that Authority was given him to preach the Word of God, that he has neither the right to occupy the pulpit nor to wear the stole, the badge of his authority, except by virtue of his commission. He comes before his people as one sent, and, in spite of the expressed dislike of ecclesiastical authority, men accept and respect it. “ It often happens,” writes the Bishop of Ripon, “ that what a clergyman says is invested with a weight of authority far higher than

it merits. 'I heard it in Church' is with some as sufficient for faith as 'I read it in print' is for others." And if he is seen to be wanting in due regard for it, if he is familiar and careless in speech and manner, if he regards his office as teacher or preacher as having nothing more in it than that which he himself gives to it, men quickly perceive the difference. "Remember," said Bishop Lightfoot in a charge to candidates for ordination, "that you are ambassadors, and . . . if you forget that you are ambassadors your work will be feeble, flaccid, listless, and inefficient, because nerveless and sinewless."

"We are the leaders of the people," writes Bishop Phillips Brooks. "Woe to our preaching if in any feeble, false humility we abdicate that place! The people pass us by and pity us if they see us standing in our pulpits saying, 'We know nothing particular about these things whereof we preach; we have no authority; only come here and we will tell you what we think and you shall tell us what you think, and so perhaps together we can strike out a little light.' That is not preaching. There has been pulpit talk like that, and men have passed it by and hurried on to find some one who at least pretended to tell them the will of God."

Surely it is only the common gossip about sermons and instructions, together with the degradation of preaching that has naturally followed in the wake of an irregular ministry, that could lead any one

to feel that he could dispense with this Divine Authority. For though "required for the effective discharge of such grave and sacred duties as are involved in the celebration of the Holy Sacrament and in dealing with the consciences of men, it is," writes Canon Liddon, "specially required in the pulpit. A belief in his call and commission from Christ can alone make his pulpit ministrations tolerable to a man of common sense and modesty. The more a man knows of God, of the human soul, of the vast range of spiritual truth; the more he knows of the attainments, intellectual or moral, of those around him and of his own far-reaching and radical shortcomings: the more must he shrink, if left to himself, from such a part as that of enforcing spiritual truths—even the truths of which he is most certain—upon a large assemblage of his fellowmen. . . . All that is best, if I may so say, in his natural, as still more in his regenerate man, conspires to bid him keep in the background among his fellows and to hold his peace. But a necessity is laid upon him from heaven which continually does violence to this inclination. The never-forgotten consciousness of the mission which he has received whispers to him, as of old to the prophet by the river of Chebar, that he may not if he would be silent. There may be many better men unordained than he; but still his responsibilities are not theirs."

So he comes to men with that majestic preface,

the tremendous significance of which is often missed, "In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," and, as he makes it, not seldom uses either secretly or openly, as the custom of the Church in which he officiates dictates, that divine symbol which implies, with its remorseless crossing out of the letter I, that he will, by God's help, leave out everything that would lead men to think more of his own name than of the Sacred Name, that he will discourage to the utmost any talk among his people that suggests that he is anything more than "*the Voice of one crying in the wilderness.*"

For how can he put his own name into competition with the Sacred Name! How can he make a solemn profession of preaching or teaching in God's Name when all the time he is seeking to establish his own name! Yes, this sense of a divine authority so far from leading to self-assertion or self-exaltation rather urges such self-abnegation as characterizes the faithful ambassador who would be ashamed to find that the mission with which he had been entrusted was forgotten in the admiration men bestowed on the diplomatic manner in which he had handled it.

This thought naturally leads to the second element of Christ's authority—the authority of the message. The Prophet's authority gives him no claim to be an authoritative guide on any subject he may desire. "There is nothing in our quality as preachers that gives us any claim to be authoritative guides to men in politics, education, or science. On one thing

alone may we speak with authority, and that is the will of God." This is revealed to us in the mind of the Catholic Church as expressed in the Holy Scriptures of the Catholic Creeds. And if we seek for further guidance as to the Truth we are empowered to give our people, we find it in our Prayer Book.

Now, just as in preaching it is necessary that we have an inner conviction of the truth of our message, as though we had seen its truth or heard it at God's mouth, so in teaching we must have an equally certain conviction that the message given to us by the Church is true. "If, though there be many things which perplex, you do not with your whole heart accept the written Bible as God's law of life and death to men," writes the late Bishop of Ely, "you cannot be a faithful dispenser of the Word of God."

And so also we may add, if, though there be statements here and there which perplex you, you do not with your whole heart accept the teaching of the Prayer Book as God's will for the Church of England and the Church in America, you cannot give your faithful diligence always to minister the Doctrine of Christ as this Church hath received. It may be asked here, "Is this possible? If Plato is right in saying that "seven years' silent inquiry are required by a man to learn a truth in," then surely a lifetime is necessary for learning and knowing all the truths of the Catholic Faith as enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer. Must we not then make a selection and

confine our teaching to those truths of which we have personal experience? We have already said that something like this must be our rule for preaching as distinguished from teaching, but it would be as untrue to the conception of teaching as it would be false to our commission to teach the whole counsel of God if we were to narrow down the dogmatic office to those truths only of which we had spiritual experience. It is clearly our duty to put forward the whole Gospel, "the whole area of its Doctrine, the many sides on which it attracts and awes and subdues the soul of man—in unabridged, unmutilated completeness," and it is equally clear that, for the sake of our people, we cannot wait until all has been wrought into our life. How, then, can we teach it with authority? Only on the ground that we believe our Church to be a living branch of the Body of Christ, and the Bible, Catholic Creeds, and the Prayer Book to be the authoritative expression of her mind. "Instead of reserving our private judgment to be called into exercise upon every point of Revelation, one by one as circumstances bring these into prominence, we are asked," writes Bishop Woodford, "to apply our judgment once for all to the primary question whether the Church is designed by God to be, and so speaks as to be according to that design, our guide and instructor; and, having settled this in the affirmative, to sit at the feet of the mistress so provided and accepted, and receive from her and dispense to others the doctrines which she delivers.

Every teacher has to do this, more or less. He accepts the conclusions of certain recognized masters of the subject he is teaching and gives them to the class with an authority greater than that which could have been derived from his own personal investigation. He is satisfied that the great masters are right, and has no wish to go beyond what they have laid down." So, also, entirely satisfied with the Authority of the Church, the prophetic teacher is persuaded that even on those points which he does not himself clearly see, she will commend herself to others. He has learnt to recognize certain natural tendencies of his own mind, evangelical, ecclesiastical, or sacramental, and rejoices in a Mistress so catholic-minded that whilst she teaches fully that which he easily assimilates does not fail to make provision for those who have inherited other traditions than his own. And it is in teaching thus widely that he himself grows in a knowledge larger than he could have believed possible, and finds himself rejoicing in certain aspects of the truth which were once hard and not quickly discerned.

The Church's Authority covers a large field of doctrine, and meets every real human need. But this does not prevent a certain temptation to prophesy "out of our own hearts." On the one hand there are those who, like the prophetesses of Ezekiel's time, "muffle up the arms of God, so that His judgments may not be seen, and blind the eyes and cover the heads of those on whom those judgments are about

to fall,"^{*} those who make the Gospel as easy as possible to the worldly and luxurious, and so preach a hope for the final restoration of all the lost and impenitent; on the other there are those who, out of an earnest zeal to restore Catholic discipline, lay burdens, and grievous to be borne, upon those who are not able to bear them. And with what result? With this, that the authority invoked, being found to rest on no adequate grounds, is sensibly weakened, and when urged for truths and practices taught by the Church finds no full response. We may never forget that to use the authority with which we are invested in behalf of what is not really authoritative is to help forward that growing disrespect for all authority which is a part of the independence of our age.

(2) *Devotion to Truth and Boldness.*

We pass on now to the second characteristic of our Lord's teaching—its devotion to truth and consequent boldness. The Apostle, who was best able to understand the character of his Divine Master, when recalling, under the power of the Spirit, the two features that seemed to sum up His Divine life, spoke of the one as Grace, the other as Truth. "He was *full* of Truth" (St. John i. 14). And our Lord not only spoke of His Mission as being that of a Witness-Bearer to the Truth (St. John xviii. 37), but of Himself as

^{*} Ezek. xiii. 18.

being the very Truth Itself (St. John xiv. 6). This attitude towards, or rather identification with, the Truth had one natural consequence which was felt in all His teaching—a fearless indifference to all those considerations which so greatly interfere with our human statements of the Truth. We are all sensitive to certain influences, such as rank, wealth, or other social advantages ; and whilst we would not willingly trim our conception of the Truth to suit the great man who is thinking of becoming one of our congregation, whilst we should shrink from altering a point in our Bible class lesson on finding that some Nicodemus had come to listen, we might be conscious of his presence and possibly think it wise so to modify our teaching that it would not be unacceptable.

It was of course impossible that the Truth could be moved by any such thoughts as these. He taught the rich as He would teach the poor, the wise as the ignorant. The wealth, rank, and position of men like Herod, Pilate, Nicodemus, and Simon the Pharisee in no way affected the message that He had to give them except that the possession of such advantages with their corresponding responsibilities called for a still clearer and bolder expression of the Truth. The severest things He ever said were spoken to men who had social privileges. “Go and tell that fox Herod.” “Go and sell all that thou hast and come and follow Me.” “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”

"Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees, fools, blind guides, hypocrites!" "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." These and other like expressions were those He used when dealing with men who ought to have known better. No wonder they felt that He cared nothing for the person of men, was entirely indifferent to their position.

But not only was He markedly independent, as a teacher, of the claims of social advantages, but He was just as little moved by that which sometimes affects us so strongly—the presence of a large congregation. It is not of course that we would lower the standard of truth, but that in our desire not to miss what we consider to be a great opportunity, we may so present a doctrine that it pleases without awakening, comforts without warning, and encourages without guiding. Not so with the Truth. It was to the crowded congregation in the synagogue of Capernaum that He addressed those searching words, "Ye seek me not because ye saw the signs but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled"; it was to the large crowds that followed Him in warm admiration that He turned and said, "Whosoever doth not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

And His teaching in private, even to His own friends, was very stern when occasion demanded. To St. Peter, who ventured in overconfident zeal to rebuke his Master when He spake of the way of the Cross as being the path along which he must go, He turned and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for

thou savourest not the things that be of God but those that be of men."

Boldness is not a common virtue. Perhaps it is not more easy in these days when it is attacked by the insidious enemies of ease, popularity, and peace than when it was rewarded by the stake, the cross, or the rack. To risk the further curtailment of a small income, the absence from Church with all the hardness that follows of the principal men in the place, the black looks of people you care for, seems a small matter only to those who are never called upon to experience it.

Now, our Lord knew that fear would always be a danger to His friends, so whilst He says but comparatively little about the wisdom, tact, and gentleness necessary for teaching, He constantly warns them against cowardice. In His short charge to the Apostles He reiterates no less than three times the exhortation "Fear them not"; and whilst He attaches a high reward to an honest and open confession of His Truth, connects with any shamefaced denial of it the most terrible prospect that can be conceived, that of being denied by the only Person whose word will be of any worth in the last great Assize. (St. Matt. x. 26, 28, 31.)

These counsels were not lost upon the Apostles and their disciples. Their preaching is constantly described as marked by an open, fearless boldness, a *παρρησία*, an openness of speech which speaks the truth without regard to possible consequences. St.

Stephen, on trial for his life, when there was call for every possible caution, ends his sermon with the words, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye"; and St. Paul concludes sermons to men who were prejudiced against him with such words as "Beware therefore lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets, 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish'; or, 'Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean, from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.' " So after three years' teaching at Ephesus he could say with all sincerity, "I never lowered my sails (*οὐκ ὑπέστειλάμην*) in declaring unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts xx. 27). All that God had given him to teach, even though he knew that the central thought of it was either a stumbling-block or foolishness to his audiences, he gave fully and clearly, privately as well as publicly.

Yes, the first teachers knew perfectly well that human nature, being proud, resents humiliations, and is likely "in its own fashion and way to express its roused resentment. . . . They knew that the patient to whom they were carrying the medicine that would cure him would often refuse the draught and would punish the physician who dared to offer it. But they loved man, and they loved and feared their God too sincerely and too well, to infuse any new ingredients, or to withdraw any of the bitter but needful elements of cure. They accepted civil and

social proscription ; they endured moral and physical agony ; they embraced, one after another, with cheerful hearts, the very warrants and instruments of their death ; —because they had counted the cost, and had measured too well the greatness of their task and the glories of their anticipated eternity, to shrink sensitively back at the first symptoms of opposition or difficulty.”¹

But though so bold, their boldness was very far from that overweening and arrogant confidence which is the very opposite of humility and meekness. It was not inconsistent with a certain shrinking timidity. “It is probable,” writes Dean Paget, “that St. Paul suffered a great deal from fear. He might perhaps have said with the most brilliantly courageous soldier of our day, ‘For my part, I am always frightened, and very much so.’ Certainly he would have made his own the confession of the Psalmist, ‘I am sometime afraid,’ but, like General Gordon, he but rarely, perhaps never, gave way to it. He never acted or refused to act because of it.” According to his own confession he labored amongst the Corinthians in “weakness, fear, and much trembling,” but no ministry save that of his Master was so absolutely fearless. Having made up his mind not to know anything amongst them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, not to use enticing words of men’s wisdom, but to rely simply on the demonstration of the Spirit and the inherent power of the message he had to give, he kept to his resolve.

¹ Liddon, “Clerical Life and Work,” p. 127.

We must speak out, then, though we fear, proclaim the whole Gospel God has entrusted to us even though men dislike it and criticise it as narrow, hard, and unjust. Though it is probably true that modern preaching is, as a rule, deficient in this virtue of boldness, yet we are able to point to such illustrations as that of Dean Hook using his only opportunity of preaching before the Queen to proclaim the authority of the Church, and that of the Bishop of New York serving the occasion of the Washington Centenary by a stern rebuke of national vices rather than by a flattery of national hopes. I have spoken of this at some length, for there is good reason to believe that it is a need of the times. Mr. Gladstone, no bad judge of what men want, writes that, in his opinion, "the clergymen of the day were not, as a rule, severe enough upon their congregations. They do not sufficiently lay upon the souls and consciences of their hearers their moral obligation or probe their lives and bring them up to the bar of conscience; the sermons most needed are those similar to the one that offended Lord Melbourne when he complained that he was obliged to listen to a preacher who insisted upon a man's applying his religion to his private life. This is the kind of preaching men need most and get least of." The true teacher will not be afraid of the law "*veritas odium facit*," and for this reason, that precious as popular opinion may be, the Truth is even more valuable. Popular opinion may vary, be set in one direction on one day

and in the opposite the day following, but Truth is ever the same, and the more attractive the better she is known.

(3) *Sympathy.*

We now pass on to the third marked characteristic of our Lord's teaching—His sympathy. Boldness and indifference to public opinion often mean hardness and want of feeling. A bold teacher not seldom rides rough-shod over the prejudices and traditions of his people. Whether it be on the iron steed of the Church or on the more restive horse of socialism, such an one plunges along his way quite careless of the sensitive feelings he is treading under foot. And though the respect for and interest in such bold and free riding will often deceive such an one into a foolish confidence that he is succeeding because there are many there to admire his audacity, he finds, as time goes on, that whilst men were arrested they were not convinced. It was not so, we need hardly say, with our Lord, who loved to be pointed out rather as the Lamb of God than as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who could appeal to men to come to Him because He was "meek and lowly in heart." Indifference to the accidental advantages or disadvantages of men was never betrayed into a carelessness about the man himself. The imperial state of a Roman governor, the luxurious surroundings of an Idumæan prince, were matters of small interest, but Pilate and Herod were men whom

He tried to win, for they were amongst those for whom He was about to die. With their temptations and difficulties He was in full sympathy, and by His reasoning with the one and His austere silence towards the other, He sought to arouse in them a sense of their awful condition. It was this sympathy with men that made our Lord so attractive a teacher. "The common people heard Him gladly," because they felt that He cared about them.

As we have seen, He took pains to understand them, and labored with infinite patience and wisdom so to put His truth that they might be persuaded to listen. In the Sermon on the Mount, for example, He sought to win their attention by describing at the outset the great advantages and privileges that belong to the citizens of His Kingdom. "Words of blessing fell on the ears of those who were used only to hear of their shortcomings and to be treated as outcasts; and when their attention was caught by the unusual sound and they listened to hear who it was who were blessed, they found it was not the strong and the wealthy and the high-spirited—those whom they regarded as having the good things of existence whilst they had the bad—but the blessed are the poor in spirit, and this Kingdom of Heaven newly proclaimed belonged to them. The attention caught by the opening is kept alive by the unexpected nature of the matter."¹

It is ever thus; in all His teaching, whether public

¹ Latham, "Pastor Pastorum," p. 210.

or private, He begins by compelling His hearers, in spite of themselves, to agree with Him, and then leads them by an irresistible chain of argument to a conclusion they must either accept or else condemn themselves for refusing. "What man of you is there?" He frequently asks, thereby gaining a general assent, and then from this principle of agreement He leads them to an unexpected consequence. The living subject is never forgotten in the treatment to which it is subjected. This is what we understand by sympathy. It was this that He recommended to the Apostles in the words of counsel, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." And though it is true that the Christian Church has often been justly charged with want of sympathy through the hardness of some of those who have spoken in her name, yet her best teachers, those whose names are on the roll of her saints, have always been distinguished as men of wide sympathy. As we think of St. Paul and St. John, of St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine, of St. Hugh of Lincoln and St. Francis of Assisi, we feel that their highest distinction was their love for those whom they taught. There is no occasion to give illustrations showing how such became "all things to all men" in their endeavors to win some. None save the Master was bolder for the Truth's sake than St. Paul, who told the Galatians sharply that if they were circumcised Christ would profit them nothing. "But, as a rule, how tender he is, how full of consideration and charity, how

tolerant, how hopeful! The prejudice against the meat exposed for sale in the Corinthian market was a weakly superstition; but for himself he would rather eat no flesh whatever while the world lasted than offend the conscience of a weak brother. The private observance of days, Jewish or other, at Rome, was no part of the Church's rule, and might easily engender Jewish errors; but the Apostle insists that those who kept these days did so to the Lord, and should be respected in the observance. The strong, he says, with a touch of quiet irony, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. And, to the scandal of some, no doubt, at the time, but for the instruction of the Church of all ages, what he preached he practised."¹ And it is to be noticed how he followed his divine Master in beginning all his instructions and sermons with a word of sympathy. There is scarce a letter but commences with the praise of those to whom he is writing, scarce a sermon that does not seek at the outset to win over prejudice by showing a real interest either in the history or the life of his hearers.

And this all teachers of experience have recommended. One suggests that preachers "should preface their sermons with intercessory prayer for the people" he is about to address; another, that the introduction "should win people's attention and place you on good terms with them so that they may

¹ Liddon, "Clerical Life and Work," p. 317.

be in a teachable frame of mind''; another, that the sermon must be written or prepared in the full "consciousness of an audience, and that only so is it enthusiastic, personal, and warm";¹ another, that we should think of the wonderful opportunity of helping that lies before us—"of the spiritual want which perchance we can supply, of the inward, unspoken sorrow which we can console, of the heart-craving which we can satisfy, . . . and so catch the spirit of our Master—hear His voice saying, 'I have compassion on the multitudes.'"² In all these ways we shall grow in sympathetic touch as we prepare, and kindle more perhaps in the silence and solitude of our own study than in the church; but, as Bishop Phillips Brooks says, "the wonderful thing is that that fire, if it is really present in the sermon when it is written, stays there and breaks out into flame again when the delivery of the sermon comes." Sympathy once begotten is not dependent on the state of the weather, the size of the congregation, or the way in which the service is rendered; latent for a time, it at once leaps into expression when it faces those whom it has already seen and labored over in prayers.

¹ Bp. Brooks, "Lectures on Preaching," p. 172.

² Bp. Boyd Carpenter, "Preaching," p. 26.

DEVOTIONS.

Blessed be Thy sacred Lips and most gracious Tongue, with which Thou didst so often express the delight of the heavenly Life, and commend to us the counsels of eternal truth ; announcing distinctly to the whole world that Thou Thyself art the true and marvellous Light.

Grant me, most loving Jesus, Thou best of Masters, that I may with a holy thirst drink from the streams of Thy saving teaching. May I diligently study, wisely understand, sweetly taste, peacefully enjoy the sacred words of Thy mouth, and carefully fashion all my discipline according to their guidance.¹

O Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, the Fount of Wisdom, grant me ability to understand, capacity to retain, facility in learning, and gracious eloquence of expression. In Thy mercy help me in all my preparation to begin wisely, to persevere steadfastly, and to perfect thoroughly the lesson Thou dost give me to learn. So may I edify those whom Thou hast committed to my care.

Hymn 357 (A. & M.) or 586.

Psalm cxix. 97-104.

Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent.

¹ "Meditations on the Life of Christ," St. Thomas à Kempis.

IV.

THE LION OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE KING."

MEDITATION.

The Royalty of Christ.

Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.
—*St. John xviii. 37.*

"Art Thou a King?"—It seemed so unlikely! Alone
(1) —a prisoner—bound—bearing in His Body
The Question. the marks of ill-treatment! Where was His Kingdom, where His subjects, where His Power? So, too, asks the world of His Priests. These men, so straitened in their resources, so wanting in the outward symbols of power, so widely criticised—these men kings! Yes, for the King of Kings hath *"made us kings unto God."*

"Thou sayest I am a King. To this end was I born,
(2) *and for this cause came I into the world,*
The Answer. *that I should bear witness unto the Truth"*
—Yes, the very purpose and object of the Incarnation of the Word was to establish a kingdom over which He might reign. And as every kingdom stands for something, has some national characteristic, so His should bear witness to the Truth.

"The Truth," as delivered by Christ and His Apostles, as enshrined in the Holy Scriptures, as expressed in the Œcumenical Creeds, is the banner of His Kingdom,

reared up aloft "for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." May God give me grace to be faithful to it, to be loyal to the flag of Christ.

"Every one that is of the Truth heareth My voice"—

(3) Christ saw what Pilate could not see. He **Its Meaning.** looked down the ages and saw troops of men, women, and children streaming along every road that leads to the City of God. All these confess themselves His subjects. Philosophers, warriors, kings, statesmen, lawyers, merchants, artisans, and craftsmen become His sworn soldiers. It is in this that my hope lies: the children of the Truth will obey the Truth if I am but faithful in delivering it.

I will strive by God's help always to remember the dignity of that Royal Character with which **Resolution.** God has endowed me, and to seek to express in all my work of organization that Truth which is the inner spirit of His Kingdom.

IV.

THE LION OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE KING."

The Royal Office.

We have seen how the message of God has been borne along through the ages by "prophets which have been since the world began"—prophets of Judaism such as Samuel, Isaiah, and Daniel ; prophets of Christendom such as St. Paul, St. John, St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine—all of whom find their model and great example in the great Prophet, Jesus Christ, the very Word of God, whose portrait in this respect is given us by St. Matthew. Men, as we have already said, have understood this aspect of ministry better than any other. That Christ was a great Teacher and that His ministers must follow His example in this particular is so widely accepted that with many the words Preacher and Minister are synonymous. And yet a little thought is sufficient to show us that the Kingdom of God could never have been built up by preaching alone. A kingdom suggests organization, and for organization we must have a king to plan and develop it.

Now, as we look once again at Ezekiel's vision of

perfect ministry, we see that the living creatures which supported the chariot of God had not only the face of a man, but "they four had also the face of a lion." The lion indicates Royal Majesty and Strength. The character of "the man," then, must be supplemented by that of "the king." The ministerial office is not exhausted in the work of the Prophet, which needs to be organized and developed by the work of the Ruler.

This indeed is frankly acknowledged now everywhere by Churchpeople. Those who are interested in the parochial vacancies that occur now and again, ask whether the man whom they are thinking of recommending to such and such a position is merely a good preacher, whether it can be said that he is a good visitor, a "man of affairs," with tact and wisdom for the organization or the carrying on of a well-organized parish. Is he able to originate, plan, and execute the various beneficial schemes which are now thought to be necessary for the building up of Christ's Kingdom?

It might at first be thought that in this we should gain but little direct help from our Lord's example. The various societies and guilds which form a part of every well-worked parish seem to have no relation to any work of His. And yet not only is He spoken of as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," "the King of Kings"; not only has one of the four Gospels, that of St. Mark, been written to delineate His Royal Character, but His Priesthood, the essential

characteristic of which we hope to speak of in the next address but one, is described as being after "the order of Melchizedek" rather than that of Aaron, clearly implying that it has regal characteristics. He is a King-Priest. What function, then, belongs to Him in this regard? It is the office of a king to found and establish kingdoms, to plan their extension and well-being, to defend them from attacks, and to devise all such means as may conduce to the well-being of his subjects. This we shall see our Lord did. And something of this kind every one who is associated with Him in His Melchizedek Priesthood is called upon to do. He is made a King as well as a Priest unto God. His duty is not only that of teaching, but, as our Ordinal rightly expresses it, of "seeking for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, of feeding and providing for them; he is never to cease his labour, care, and diligence till he has done all that lieth in him to bring all such as are or shall be committed to his charge unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left either for error in religion or for viciousness in life." In principle this is the work of a king, and in the execution of it he will find help and guidance by looking at the way in which Christ ruled as King.

Now, it is obvious that for work of this kind the first thing necessary is a plan and system. A ruler without method would soon find his affairs in confu-

sion. Having a plan, his next duty is to associate with him those who can carry it out. Their training or direction will naturally follow. We shall confine our remarks during this address to these three points: (1) the plan, (2) the workers, (3) their direction, reserving the personal characteristics of the work to the next address.

(1) *The Plan.*

So much has been said, and well said, by Canon Liddon in his Bampton Lectures about the plan of Jesus Christ, that it is quite unnecessary for me to do anything but remind you of it. It was clear and full at the outset, as he says. "It issues almost 'as if in a single jet' and with a fully developed body from the thought of Jesus Christ. Put together the Sermon on the Mount, the Charge to the Twelve Apostles, the Parables of the Kingdom, the Discourse in the Supper-Room, and the institution of the two great Sacraments, and the plan of our Saviour is before you."¹ But not only was it clear and full, it was also subject to no change. "Certainly with the lapse of time, He enters upon a larger and larger area of ministerial action; He develops with majestic assurance, with decisive rapidity, the integral features of His work; His teaching centres more and more upon Himself as its central subject; but He nowhere retracts or modifies or speaks or acts as

¹ Liddon: Bampton Lectures, III, p. 113.

would one who feels that he is dependent upon events or agencies which he cannot control." Nothing was left to what we call chance or accident; all had been foreseen and calculated. And though its realization was very slow and in the face of tremendous obstacles, our Lord is perfectly confident that nothing can ultimately balk it. He is patient because He is sure. He is calm because He knows it is indestructible. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹ "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."²

As Christ had His plan, so, too, every Priest-King associated with Him must have a plan. We may not have the privilege of following so closely in His steps as to found a kingdom in a place where His Name is unknown, but to all the duty will come of developing, perfecting, and establishing it. And for that a plan is necessary. We may have the most interesting and romantic parish in the world, its past history may be a subject of common talk owing to the great names associated with its rectorate, and the great battles that have been fought within its limits, but without organization its power is idle. It influences neither the neighborhood nor the life of the diocese in which it is situated. It may be fortunate in possessing an eloquent rector, or a wealthy congregation, but without method or plan the power of both is limited. Bishop Thorold tells us that when he visited Greece, and, from the sum-

¹ St. Matt. xvi. 18.

² St. Matt. xxiv. 35.

mit of Pentelicus, looked down over the tumulus of Marathon and the gleaming waters of the Ægean, upon the hills and valleys of that immortal land, the impression he received was of a somewhat commonplace character. "What that interesting country seemed to need far more than extended country, costly armaments, or even a footstool in a European Congress, was *roads*. Until she has suitable means of communication between her towns and her forests and her mines and her quarries and her seaports, she will not be important; for she cannot be prosperous." Applying this impression to parochial work, he added: "What roads are to the commerce of a country, organization is to the methods of the Church. . . . The Apostles mended their nets, as well as used them. Noah built as well as preached." We ask ourselves, then, as we face this part of our work, what is our plan? We know the ground, are familiar with its needs, but have we any clear idea as to how the remote parts of our parish are to be brought into closer touch with its centre; have we any method by which those who live a mile or two away from the Church may yet retain their fellowship? Again, there are deep and difficult valleys or gaps, as they are sometimes called, made by some moral upheaval in past days, which require to be bridged; or damp, marsh-like places, where spirits are depressed and spiritual malaria infects the atmosphere, which need to be drained, or else bedded with a good road; or thick woods, "wherein all the beasts

of the forest do move," which ought to be cleared. Of what service are our sermons and instructions in the Church so long as these things are present ?

How useless to urge that those living far away ought to feel their needs so deeply that neither distance nor weather is felt to be a hindrance, that the spiritually depressed ought to glow with emotion when they hear the church bell, that those whose spiritual faith is almost gone through some terrible disappointment in an ungodly predecessor are at once to give their confidence to one whom they do not know, and that the sinful whose actions infect the whole atmosphere of the place had best be left alone !

We cannot content ourselves with such excuses nor plead that our duty is fulfilled so long as we have hours fixed when people may come and see us. That was not His way. "Jesus went about all the cities and villages . . . preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom,"¹ and that has ever been the Church's way. "You know," says St. Paul to the elders of Ephesus, "how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you and have taught you publicly and *from house to house*."² So it is the office of a deacon, according to the Anglican Ordinal, to search for the sick, poor, and impotent people of the parish—a comprehensive phrase embracing all the needy. We do not cease to be deacons when we become priests ; the lower office is

¹ St. Mark vi. 6.

² Acts xx. 20.

taken up into the higher, and where we are alone its duties must be fulfilled by us. It has been hazarded that our Lord specially contemplated His Divine plan during His forty days' retreat in the wilderness. It may be so, and if so, can we not, then, during this retreat, sketch out some plan by which the fellowship and warmth of the Church may be more widely felt? And when we have our plan, let us be patient with it. Remembering how long our King has had to wait, remembering the very slow way in which it developed, let us check all unreasonable haste, taking pains that our proposed arrangements are well laid out, that they are not imprudent nor wanting in spiritual generosity. Our Lord's plan cost Him His life. What will ours cost? See the caution He gives. (St. Luke xiv. 25-33.)

(2) *The Workers.* (a) *Choosing Workers.*

Our Lord not only had a well-defined plan for His work, but also men who should help Him to carry it out. It were better to have men without a plan than a plan without men. When Lord Lawrence was asked for a few hints as to how he had managed so successfully in restoring order during the mutiny, he replied: "It is not our system, but our men." Of course, had our Lord chosen, He could have carried out the whole plan of building up His Kingdom without the help of a single creature; but the principle of the Incarnation is coöperation. He chose

to save man through the assumption of Human Nature; so, too, He chose to perfect His work of salvation by fellowship with mankind. The wine-press indeed He trod alone. "Of the people there was none with Him," but the foundation of His Church consisted not only of the Great Corner-Stone, but also of twelve stones closely cemented with it. It was ever His way as expressed in the words, "I *and* the children thou hast given Me."

Our Lord, then, at the outset of His ministry seeks for men. We note first where He looks for them. It is not in cultured Jerusalem, where learned scribes, scholars, and doctors are to be found, but in the wilderness of Judæa. He goes away from the ecclesiastical centre, where He might have had the assistance of men of wealth like Joseph of Arimathæa or men of social distinction like Nicodemus, to the Jordan, whither publicans, harlots, soldiers, and social outcasts were hurrying. And this because He is looking for spiritual rather than carnal weapons—weapons forged in the hot fires of the Baptist's stern discipline. He is looking for men who knew by personal experience what the needs of the soul were, and who were waiting for some one to satisfy them—men who practised bodily self-denial and knew how to pray. And such He found amongst the disciples of the Baptist, men who had not only publicly confessed their sins (St. Mark i. 5), but learned to fast and pray (St. Mark ii. 18, and St. Luke xi. 1). Are we wiser than He? Is the disciple above his Master?

If not, why do we employ methods so different in principle from His ? We seek for the men of position—the wealthy merchant, the rising lawyer, the influential tradesman. It may be that we neglect the faithful workers trained under the eye of our earnest predecessor. We think we shall find difficulties with them. They have had a different training, are accustomed to certain habits of devotion with which we are unfamiliar, and perhaps know only a very elementary Gospel of Repentance ; they have indeed spiritual fervor, but are without the culture or worldly advantages which we have thought necessary for success in parochial work. We recognize that our parish consists mainly of people of their own rank of life, and yet we shrink from using those who best understand their prejudices. We are repelled by their dulness or narrowness, by their roughness or shyness, forgetting that our Lord fashioned a St. Peter out of Simon, a St. Matthew out of Levi the publican. We know well enough that they have a devotion and personal love to our Lord which those we have selected seem to be without ; but we ask ourselves how shall we ever make anything out of them ? And so we prefer the more cautious and timid Nicodemus to the zealous James or Andrew. We are not, of course, implying that there are no earnest, spiritual-minded men amongst the wealthy and educated—such an implication would argue great ignorance of the forces which the Anglican Church commands—but that we are rather inclined to look to the homes

of culture and refinement for our workers than to the cottages of the poor, which so often contain real spiritual wealth. The Galileans are never very attractive to those who are accustomed to the careful manners and refined pronunciation of a cultured Judæa, but the Galileans conquered the world in spite of the roughness of their accent and the reproach that they were "unlearned and ignorant men."

The Workers. (b) Finding Workers.

We have seen what kind of men our Lord sought for. We now consider how He found them. In the first place, we notice that He regarded them as His by gift rather than by discovery. "Thine they were," He says in His prayer to the Father before He suffered, "and Thou gavest them Me." Acting in accordance with this conviction, our Lord does not invite the first disciples. He simply places Himself where such as He desires are likely to be, and waits for them to be given Him. On the first day, in spite of the uplifting and directing words of the Baptist, who points Him out, none follow Him, and He spends the day alone; but on the second day there is an immediate response, and St. Andrew accompanied, it would seem, by St. John, seek Him out and stay some hours with Him.

The Priest-King who imitates this sublime attitude of faith will be in no hurry to choose those who are to help in the building up of the kingdom of

God. He asks that they may be given him, and then quietly waits. But this waiting is no lazy, indolent staying at home until some enthusiast shall beg to be pressed into the service ; rather, the expectant Ruler seeks the places where the spiritual-minded are wont to be found, and then patiently waits till some one seeks him out desiring a fuller instruction in the Gospel. Faith in this, as in our prophetic ministry, is our first need—such faith as led Samuel to put aside his own judgment and pass over Eliab, and Jesse's other sons, waiting till God's will should be clearly revealed. The Davids are not those who are prominent in the affairs of the world, and it needs a peculiar spiritual insight, the gift of the Holy Ghost, to find them. But before passing on let us note the welcome our Lord gives those who seek Him. It was at ten in the morning that the interview took place, and He gave them the rest of the day. Not an hour or two, but a whole day ! It is in this way that devoted workers are made.

Our Lord now waits again till those who know Him bring others. St. Andrew finds his own brother Simon, and St. John doubtless his brother James. So the tie already formed is strengthened. To bring others of itself strengthens attachment, and when those brought are of kin, there is an added bond which keeps them from falling apart. We see here another principle, that of waiting till those we have already won have persuaded others to join them. The time may be long and work may be standing

still, but better that we suffer delay than the disappointment and hindrance that unworthy workers always cause.

Perhaps half the little band of Apostles was gathered together by spiritual impulse or the persuasion of friends. Our Lord does not, however, confine Himself to these two methods of obtaining workers. There are some whom He Himself finds. "*He findeth Philip and saith unto him, Follow Me*" (St. John i. 43). He found also St. Matthew and bade him follow Him. It may be He found and called some of the others. Why, we ask, does He pursue this plan? The answer may be seen, we think, in the characters of those thus called. St. Philip was evidently of a shrinking, sensitive character without much spiritual ability to penetrate the mysteries of faith (see St. John vi. 7; xii. 21; xiv. 8-9). He needed the personal encouragement which came with the strong words of Christ. And St. Matthew's position as a publican would have always kept him back from hoping that he could have the honor of so intimate an acquaintance with our Lord as the position of a disciple indicated. Our Lord called them because they needed the help of His outward expression of sympathy.

Such there may be amongst those to whom we preach. And with them we may have the less fear in dealing directly because neither their character nor their social position would of themselves be likely to persuade us to take action; their spiritual force

alone moves us to enroll them amongst our inner band of workers. It is those who have means or influence with whom we are most likely to make a mistake. And if we should ever be tempted by such purely worldly considerations, it may be well to remember how our Lord met such advances. To the young man of wealth He replied, "Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me"; to the member of the Sanhedrin He replied, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." The last answer drove the questioner back for three years, the first seemed as though it led to his being lost forever; but as the moral cowardice of the one was conquered by the death of Christ, so it is to be hoped that the selfishness of the other was ultimately broken down by His love. Perhaps many parishes would have been saved from serious troubles had not the desire to have wealth and position associated with the Church been given too free a rein.

It may be asked here, what is the parish to do whilst the clergyman is waiting thus cautiously for helpers? What about the Sunday-school, the choir, the guilds, etc.? Are not spiritual persons required for such duties, and, if so, must not some other method be adopted to keep the parochial machinery going? The answer, we think, is simple. Besides the Twelve, our Lord had seventy others whom He appointed to work for Him. These did not stand in the same close relationship to Him as the Twelve.

They are not set apart to be *with Him; i.e.*, to learn His Mind and the secret counsels of His Heart, but to represent Him in the different villages which He intended visiting. They are to prepare His way (St. Luke x. 1). This is not unlike the position occupied by the Sunday-school Teachers, District Visitors, and the like. They make ready the young for the clergyman's Confirmation Classes, the sick and poor for his visits. Such will always be found in any established parish, and will be welcomed by the Priest-King as officers already trained and tried. But such are not to be confounded with those more intimate and carefully selected few who are to share his secrets, to know his plans, and interpret his mind. Those are his friends—"friends" because he makes known to them the plans which the Spirit of God suggests from time to time (St. John xv. 15).

The Workers. (c) Training Workers.

Those our Lord found and called He did not at once place in the College of Apostles. The Twelve needed training. Our Lord seems to allude to this in His Prayer of Intercession. "While I was with them I kept them in Thy Name which Thou hast given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished but the son of perdition."¹ So He speaks of the eleven who were given to Him; the twelfth, we may well believe, was not given Him—nay, he

¹ 1 St. John xvii. 12.

rather thrust himself into the position of an Apostle, our Lord graciously accepting him that if possible He might save him from the sin which even then so strongly beset him. We note the two phrases "*I kept them,*" "*I guarded them,*" the first referring to the ever-watchful care our Lord gave them, the second to His protecting hand which defended them when assaulted. Both were constant features in that training which went on beneath His own eye. We shall consider three aspects of it: (1) The education was graduated. (2) It was that of a family rather than that of a school. (3) Its guiding principles were: (a) faith and (b) order.

(1) *The Education was Graduated.*

At first those who were called were allowed to be with Him, that they might know Him, and through His Signs realize something of the greatness of His Personality. But this familiar intercourse was broken off. They were sent to their homes that they might quietly reflect on all they had heard and seen, and consider how far they were prepared to follow Him altogether. They went back to their old trade of fishing. Though chosen, they are not yet finally called. St. Peter must learn the wide difference between himself and his Master, and this the separation, followed as it was by the miraculous draught of the fish, taught him (St. Luke v. 8). He joins Christ again in the spirit of deep penitence. But even

after this some time elapses before he becomes an Apostle. Our Lord here teaches us the importance of sifting the character of those we believe to be given us before putting them into a position of responsibility. Earnestness is not the only thing necessary; humility must be learned and deepened. As the Apostles were taught their dependence upon Christ for all things by the fruitless night's fishing, so it may be that those who will one day do the Church the best service must first learn by some failure in their home or business life that their future success will depend on their faith rather than their wisdom. We must wait for some token of this humble spirit, some sign that the worker feels both the greatness of the call and his own impotence in fulfilling the tasks it involves.

(2) The Training, that of the Home rather than that of the School.

Distrust of self having been learned, our Lord takes His disciples into the most familiar fellowship with Himself. Unlike the seventy, whose first duty was to go forth into the villages and preach, their first duty is "to be with Him" (St. Mark iii. 14). They were ordained for that purpose. What blessed privileges it involved! They shared His lot, became members of His Family, slept under the same roof or skies with Him, ate and drank with Him, became His friends rather than His servants. And this close relationship our Lord expressed by the pet names He

gave them, Simon being called Peter ; James and John, Boanerges ; Levi, Matthew ; and probably Bartholomew, Nathaniel, as also by His custom (so it would seem from St. Mark xiv. 44, 45) of kissing them. Thus they were privileged to see and know something of His inner Life, just as fellow-travellers do who share the same room, meals, etc. Such a disclosure of private character is either very stimulating or weakening. We need not ask what it was in His case. The Apostle whose writings show great sensitiveness to the hateful character of sin describes Him as the Lamb without blemish and without spot, and his fellow-Apostle speaks of Him as One in "Whom was no sin." The effect of this perfectly sinless and holy life upon those who had such unique and frequent opportunities for observing it must have been very powerful. They learned to notice His look, His actions, His silence, and to be more influenced by them than by His spoken words. Seeing His rapt devotion in prayer, they begged to be taught how to pray ; observing His zeal for work, they learnt that no food brings such real refreshment as doing the Father's will. So, from the contemplation of His life, they learned sympathy for Samaritans, publicans, and outcasts ; tolerance for those who worked apart from them, love for little children, reverence for womanhood, and such personal enthusiasm for Himself as even the Cross could not altogether quench.

It may be said that, effective as our Lord's example

is in this regard, the rules and customs of modern life prevent at least any very close imitation. Things being as they are, it is impossible for a Rector to have his chief workers living with him in the house. And, of course, this is frankly admitted, though clergy houses show that even here there may be a closer approximation to our Lord's method than might at first be thought possible. But even elsewhere the principle may find a larger expression than is often supposed. The few to whom we look to interpret our minds to the people and theirs to us may and ought to be admitted to a more generous and intimate fellowship than is common. We find no difficulty in inviting those whose intellectual or social tastes are similar to ours, though they are out of full sympathy with the Church. Why, then, should we feel hesitation in inviting to a closer social intercourse those whose spirits are already one with ours in the great essentials of faith? Those who know us at home become our best interpreters, for they know the spirit that lies behind the sermon, the personality that is so often misjudged through unfortunate expression.

(3) *Its Guiding Principles. (a) Faith.*

It is not difficult to select the one principle of education on which our Lord laid most stress. It was not tact, good judgment, or wisdom, though He does speak of these; it was not sympathy with the

needs they sought to satisfy, though He shows by His whole manner of dealing with the sick how important this was : it was Faith—Faith in God and also Faith in man. He taught the first by sending them forth without money, change of clothes, or even a stick. They were to depend for their maintenance, their health, and their refreshment on God alone. So they were accustomed to live and work without any material resources. Their life, and not only selected moments of it, was one long prayer. After some experience of God's goodness in satisfying all their needs, they lost even their first feeling of wonder and surprise at finding food and shelter just when they wanted it. They grew to be "at home" in the life of faith.

But not only faith in God, but faith in man. They were to go forth with confidence that man would be the channel through which God would provide for their necessities. And through the fellowship and hospitality which they would find offered to them the Gospel would make great progress. Receiving with gladness what was put before them, abiding where they were asked to stay, they would become a part of the family life, trusting and being trusted. They would carry into dull, sad, or worldly homes the manners and sweetness they had learned at the table of Christ. People would catch something of the beauty of the Christian life, be attracted towards a life that was strong and yet tender, sober and yet affectionate.

So, too, with our chosen workers, their guiding principle must be faith—faith in God that He will enable them to meet every difficulty with success. It may sometimes be well, when necessity arises, to send them forth to a piece of work without the time or means of preparation, that they may learn that though our Lord demands that we be serious and earnest in doing our very best to fit ourselves for His work, yet He can dispense with even this. It is this gift of faith that will enable them to be calm and quiet, free from the fussiness which so often spoils good work. They are accustomed to meet with difficulties which seemed insoluble, and are familiar with the unexpected helps which come just when they are needed; so situations which to others appear to be fraught with danger are recognized by them to be opportunities for the exercise of God's Providence.

But faith in man is only less necessary than faith in God. They must learn to expect and look for a response from man. If the message is divine there are certainly some who will hear. Let them then throw themselves upon the hospitality of those they minister to, break bread with them, make a home of the house or cottage which is ready to receive them, and so illustrate the fellowship of the Church. Those who have ministered to their bodily wants will listen with fresh attention to what their guests have to say about spiritual needs. They will be prepared to champion their cause, explain away the difficulties

which their addresses or conversations arouse in the minds of others, and bear testimony to the gentle life which lies behind their bold statements of faith.

Its Guiding Principles. (b) Order.

This Royal work, with its inner circle of friends, its larger bands of helpers, with its Guilds, Brotherhoods, Teachers, etc., is so large and covers such a wide area, that the Priest-King may well feel quite troubled when contemplating it. It seems as though all his time would be spent in making arrangements for this or that meeting, and organizing this or that new field of operations which his activity has created. He fears that his strength and that of his workers will be extended over such a large surface that no particular point will feel it in any freshness. It is clear there must be method; but what must it be? It cannot be right to neglect those scattered far and wide for the sake of those who, living near the centre, have the privileges of the Church; nor can it be right to give less care to the communicants than to the ungodly. We look to our Lord for example and instruction, and find both. In His practice He confined Himself almost entirely to the Jews. It is true that He gave some teaching to Samaria and some help and sympathy to the heathen in the north and east coasts of Galilee, but this was a divergence from His principle. "He was not sent," He declared, "but to the lost sheep of the house of

Israel." We know that He does not mean by these words that He had no care for the great world of heathendom that lay outside Galilee; that was the constant subject of His prayers, and for it He was presently to die. His meaning rather was that as the night was shortly coming when no man can work, He must observe a first and second. And the first place is given to those to whom were committed the oracles of God, "to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service of God and the promises."¹ Such would necessarily, if free from prejudice, be better prepared to welcome and receive His teaching. Such would, for some time to come, be the missionaries of the world. This order He commends to the Apostles. He knew that when they received the divine inspiration and enthusiasm for missionary work in the advent of the Holy Ghost, they would be disposed to leave the work which presented such tremendous difficulties as that of Jerusalem did, and scatter themselves into all lands. But this was not to be. "Ye shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."² They were first to deliver their message to their own countrymen and then to the rest of the world. The Priest-King will, if he be wise, observe the same order. His Jerusalem, with its body of formal communicants feeling so little need of more than that to which they

¹ Rom. ix. 4.² Acts i. 8.

have been accustomed, rigidly conservative, with strong prejudices against change, and sensitive to the slightest movement in the spiritual atmosphere, does not present a very congenial field to the young man of religious enthusiasm. But his witness must first be borne there, whether they will hear or forbear. And this because he is sent to them. He cannot say with John Wesley, "the world is my parish." He has given his consent to a certain order which demands that he recognizes the jurisdiction belonging to that order. But he will be further persuaded to this by the consideration that the way being already prepared, the Churchpeople already being accustomed to a Prayer Book, a Liturgy, and the Word of God, they have something to which he can safely appeal in all his instructions. He gives himself first, then, to his communicants and next to those of Judæa, those who recognize the Church as their mother, but are not living in close, continuous fellowship with her. They need to be recalled to their allegiance and loyalty, to be reminded of their great privileges, to be persuaded to enter again into the life of the Church of God.

The Priest-King does not rest here ; he has a duty to those of Samaria, to those who once enjoyed the Church's fellowship, but who have been alienated from her by prejudice, by her coldness, or by spiritual neglect. His work with them needs to be at once conciliatory and bold. An excellent illustration of the spirit in which it should be done is given by our

Lord. But first let us notice what is not to be done. He sternly forbids threats and imprecations. On one occasion He Himself had been refused both lodging and entertainment simply on the ground that He was going to Jerusalem. The Apostles were naturally and rightly indignant at this treatment of One who had always shown such sympathy with the people of Samaria ; but when they asked whether such churlish behavior should not be visited by Divine judgment, He rebuked them for their ignorance of the spirit of His Mission, which was to save rather than destroy.¹

It may be that our desire to know our Nonconformist brethren is met by a repulse ; the hospitality or kindness we expected is refused. We are vexed and angry, for we meant well. Is it not our duty to speak plainly and forcibly of the sinfulness of this sectarian spirit ? He did not think so. Such words might give those who are already quick to misinterpret the Church's action the feeling that the Church was haughty and overbearing. Better far to do as He did—pass on quietly to another house.

We now note the example of His positive attitude. This appears in His work with the woman of Samaria. Knowing how deep-seated her prejudices were, He first approached her with a request. He puts Himself, as it were, under an obligation to her, and it is only when she is sufficiently conquered to ask of Him a blessing that He refers to the sin which prevented her receiving it. But even then note with what a

¹ St. Luke ix. 54-56.

delicate hand it is done. He helps her to make her own confession by bidding her call her husband. His answer to her blushing avowal leads her to feel that she is in the presence of One who knows her inmost thoughts. Half fearing what He may say next, she endeavors to steer the subject into a theological channel as to whether the Jew or the Samaritan were right. Our Lord not only does not refuse to follow her, but points out clearly the difference between Samaritanism and Judaism. "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."¹ But note what a force this plain statement has now that He has won her confidence. Had He begun with it, she would have been angry; but now she expresses her desire to know the truth. Comment on this is needless. Had all the Church's dealings with her erring sons and daughters been characterized by this love and wisdom we should not have known a divided Body.

It might seem as though the Priest-King could here stay were it not for the words "and unto the uttermost part of the earth." In some way His witness must be carried there. Christ, though confining His work to Judæa, showed His sympathy with the Greeks who sought Him out at the Passover. To them He gave a Gospel—that Gospel of self-sacrifice which they specially needed. But not only this; His last act was to send His followers into all the world. So, too, he who rules in His Name shows

¹ St. John iv. 22.

the same wide interest. A missionary society to collect and distribute information, to gather in subscriptions, and to excite a real desire to know something of Christ's work amongst the heathen, is with Him a first thought. And from them He hopes to supply helpers to the Mission Field, laboring that the Church should show equal enthusiasm with the Moravian Society that is said to send out one missionary for every sixty-five of her members.

DEVOTIONS.

I bless and give Thee thanks, O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou Power of God and Wisdom of the Father, for Thy glorious signs and mighty miracles, by which Thou didst nobly enlighten the world, and draw to Thy Gospel the minds of unbelievers, so clearly showing Thyself, by open proofs and radiant wonders, to be the Son of the living God, and that Thou camest upon earth to redeem lost man.

I praise and give Thee glory for Thy boundless love in manifesting Thyself so generous and so kind to all people. The poor and feeble, even the vilest sinners, feared not to draw near unto Thee. Thou didst permit them freely to speak unto Thee and to touch Thee. (*From Thomas à Kempis.*)

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified, receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

O Lord God Almighty, Who didst endue Thy holy Apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost, leave us not, we beseech Thee, destitute of Thy manifold gifts, nor yet of grace to use them always to Thy honor and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

V.

THE LION OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE KING."

MEDITATION.

Death.

We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day :
the night cometh when no man can work.—*St. John ix. 4.*

*"We must work the works of Him that sent Me, while
(1) it is day"*—Strange words from Him whose

The Pressing life was eternal! We see Him spending
Necessity. days in work and nights in prayer; cease-
lessly, continuously working for the salvation of men;
constrained, as it were, by the enemy Death, which He
saw approaching. If that be so with Him, Whose
knowledge saw the precise limits of His earthly life,
how much more ought it to drive me, who know not
whether the morrow may not be my last!

"The night cometh when no man can work"—The

(2) state when the outward activity will be for
The Night. a time suspended, when life will be inward
and the powers of the soul engaged in contemplation.
How terrible neglect of opportunities will then seem!
How great the longing to have but one of the many oc-
casions of doing good which are mine now! Up, then,
my soul and be doing; let not the care of the body or
the culture of the mind hinder thee from works which
will endure when the body has turned to dust and the
mind freed from its limitations!

Remember, O my soul, how even the saints of God
(3) have not passed away without regrets that
Unavailing so much was lost that might have been
Regrets. gained ! What if it be said of thy last days
what has been recorded of another's—how he regretted
that he had not learnt to better purpose that the secret
of a holy, active, and peaceable life was in entire sur-
render to God both of will and plan ; how he regretted
his scanty, desultory, and broken study of the Word of
God ; how he regretted his prayers ; and how he re-
gretted the absorbing influence of trifles. But it was
too late—life was gone.

I will strive, by God's help, to meditate upon Death
and Eternity more frequently, at least once
Resolution. a month, that by contemplation thereon I
may be stirred to greater activity.

V.

THE LION OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE KING."

Individual Characteristics.

We have looked at the Royal side of our Lord's Character so far as certain broad principles are concerned. As a King He plans, founds, and organizes a kingdom; as a King He chooses and trains its future ministers; as a King He sees how best He may extend it; as a King He builds it up out of the ruins of the old kingdom, fulfilling rather than destroying, transforming rather than discarding. What He did then, He is ever doing now—planning, selecting, guiding, and ordering; and though it may seem strange when we look at ourselves, it is yet true that *we* are the Ministers through whom He is seeking to fulfil His aims; *we* are the royal priesthood, anointed by the Holy Ghost to be Kings as well as Priests unto God. And being such, we must have the regal spirit as well as royal methods; we must act like kings, and not merely play the king's part. It will be well, then, to see how the King of kings does His work, that we may learn from Him what virtues constitute true kingship. We have been lately

reminded of the danger of becoming simply men of business, mere organizers, delegating our spiritual work to subordinates, and of the consequent duty of taking care that we make ourselves felt to the very finger-tips of our parochial organization.¹

It is this that we now look at. Though He as a King planned and organized, yet He never did it at a distance or in seclusion. He did not, like an Elijah, live apart from the haunts of men in some solitary mountain and from thence issue commands. His Royal Spirit was altogether different from that of the kings of the earth, as He Himself pointed out. "Ye know," He said, "that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."² In these words lies the great difference between Royal power as exercised by the world and as exercised by the Son of Man. Lordship is the sign of the one, service that of the other. A great palace, secluded grounds, a retinue of servants, mark the one; a Figure down upon His knees girt with a towel is the symbol of the other. And this great Example has had its effect even upon the world, which has now learnt to

¹ "Speculum Sacerdotum," p. 38. ² St. Mark x. 42.

believe that in a Moses and a Samuel, a St. Paul and a St. Peter, a Chrysostom and an Augustine, a Gordon and a Patteson, a Florence Nightingale and a Sister Dora, it has its noblest kings and queens. As our first Morning Collect has it in the original, "to serve God is to reign."

But we must now pass on to speak of some of the characteristic notes of this royal service as exhibited by our Lord.

(1) *The Joy of the King.*

The first we shall take is that of joy. A king is not forced by poverty or stress of circumstances to work. He is free to do as he pleases, to select that kind of work to which he feels most drawn. His work is a pleasure to him. So it was to our Lord. The work of serving man was what the prey is to the lion—the satisfaction of appetite. When the disciples who had left Him tired and faint at Jacob's well returned, they found a great change had passed over Him. He looked refreshed and vigorous. They pressed upon Him food, however, saying, "Master, eat"; but He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Wondering, they said the one to the other, "Hath any man brought Him ought to eat?" Our Lord then explained, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work" (St. John iv. 34). The completion of His Father's work, whether by Himself or by others, was always a subject of rejoicing with Him (St. Luke x. 21), and

this joy He desired His disciples to enter into and share.

We ask what were the elements of this joy and why do we know so little of it? Why is our work so far from being meat and drink, so often drudgery, which exhausts rather than refreshes?

The first answer we make is that every man, woman, and child that our Lord met was intensely interesting to Him. It mattered not whether he were Galilean or Jew, scholar or fisherman; it was sufficient that he was a member of the human race, made in the Image of His Father, and therefore with infinite possibilities before him. We shall speak of this again later; we note it here as one of the elements in our Lord's joy. The other element was this: He recognized in the life of this Samaritan woman, as in that of others, the work of His Father, which having been already carried a certain stage, it was a delight to complete. The building, to use one of Cardinal Newman's happiest illustrations of conversion, was considerably weakened; it needed but the touch of the Master to bring it to the ground.

How different our work would be if these two elements were always constituent parts of it! How interesting our small and scattered parish would be if we realized that every one within it was marked with the Divine Image! How full of hope our work would be if we always felt that it was but to *finish* the Father's work, that even in the most stubborn and obstinate, a work had already been done which

we were invited to complete ! And surely we need not Scripture to tell us that. What mean the Providential accidents, interpositions, arrangements to which all life is subject unless they are divinely ordered preparations, only needing perhaps our word and touch for that decision of the will which is implied in every true conversion?

(2) *The Industry of the King.*

We now pass on to the consideration of another characteristic of the Royal Life—Industry. "The real, true King—the Könning—the Able-Man," as Carlyle reminds us, "is ever the hardest-worked man." Our Blessed Lord shows us this in an eminent degree. No king, however large and important his affairs may have been, worked as He did. We have seen Him as He deals with the concerns of mankind, planning, organizing, and perfecting ; but the affairs of a kingdom which is to last through all time do not so engross His attention as to leave Him no time for details. He is as much occupied—nay, from the Gospels it would seem more so—with the individual as with the race.

In the first chapter of St. Mark's Gospel we have a sketch of a day's work. First, He preaches in the synagogue, then heals a demoniac. Directly this is over, He goes to the home of St. Peter, whose mother-in-law lay very sick of a fever. Then, in the evening, as soon as the sun began to go down, they brought unto

Him all that were diseased and those that were possessed with demons, and the whole city was gathered together at the door. This sketch does not pretend to be a full account ; it is only a suggestion of some of those things which occupied His attention. To gain some conception of the physical strain, we must remember that every healing cost our Lord something ; there was a loss of force—so the original in St. Luke vi. 19 and viii. 46 might be translated—a loss of force so great as to lead to absolute exhaustion. St. Mark tells us that on one occasion the Apostles took Him “ *even as He was* ” into the ship, and that there He fell into a sleep so profound that the raging of a storm and the beating of the waves into the ship failed to wake Him.

This crowded, busy life which we know sometimes led to His having no leisure even for food (St. Mark vi. 31) caused even His friends to be anxious and alarmed, so that they went out to lay hold on Him, for they said, “ He is beside Himself ” (St. Mark iii. 21). But those who knew Him best could see that it was very far from being of that fussy, disorderly, and irregular character which marks the fanatical enthusiast. Every stage of it was marked by decision and forethought. It is this that St. Mark brings before us in the constant use of the word “ immediately,” which he employs no less than seven times in his first chapter. The word marks promptitude rather than hurry. He went from one thing to another with that same quick decisiveness which

characterizes the lion as he darts upon his prey. His Blessed Mind was of course never bewildered by a multitude of details, never distracted by the variety of claims. When on His way with Jairus to heal the child that lay at death's door, He was not unmindful of the poor sufferer who crept in amongst the crowd that attended Him and secretly touched Him. And when dealing with her He still had His mind upon the anxious parent almost distracted with the terrible news just brought to him that his child had passed away. "Be not afraid, only believe," He said in quieting, encouraging tones.

The same quiet composure, if we may venture so to describe it, is marked by the large spaces of time He gave to prayer during this crowded ministry. It is after so long and heavy a day's work as St. Mark describes, that we read of His "rising up a great while before day" for prayer. With us it generally happens that in proportion as we are men of work we fail in being men of prayer. We find it so difficult to adjust the contemplative with the active life in anything like proper proportions. It is perhaps for this reason that the active, energetic parish priest is apt to be hard, rough, exacting with those who seek his aid. "I can only give you five minutes, so state your business briefly," is the spirit—we almost think the necessary spirit—of the busy man of affairs. If we are saved from this by a natural, easy temperament, we are apt to fall into the opposite mistake of wasting time or allowing others to waste it. We

take no pains to check the caller's visit from being a gossip, have not the courage to guide the worldly conversation into a serious channel. We thereby give people the impression that we have very little to do ; that they can fill in time for which they have no occupation with a call on the Rector. It is indeed difficult to steer a straight path between an official and a leisurely manner, to make it clear to our people that, though we have much to do, it is never so much as to prevent our being of service to them if that service is really required ; but we ought to aim at it. Some great minds have attained this success. Of the late eloquent Bishop of Massachusetts one who knew him writes : " From this centre of reserve which is only another name for his consecrating himself first of all to his Master, came his power to free himself from the work that was done. If he made a call upon a parishioner he stayed till his call was made, but not a moment longer. If one called upon him he was never impatient of necessary detention, but beyond what was necessary could not be delayed. If he went out among his friends for an evening, he was with them always as long as propriety required, but when the evening was over was away. If a friend met him in the street, the greeting was never hurried, was always ample, but never prolonged beyond a fine sense of fitness."

If we ask how the Bishop managed this golden mean, we may give the reply made by perhaps the hardest-worked Bishop in the American Church, who,

being asked by one of his clergy what advice he would give to those who wished to keep up with the literature of the times and at the same time make their theological reading the first thing, said, "Get up early, my son." As Canon Newbolt wisely says: "The day takes its shape from the morning; the late rising means hurried prayer, and hurried prayer means an irritable soul—a soul deprived of nourishment and rest. The first hours of the day run one into another, and the confusion of the morning extends itself to the afternoon and is felt through the day."

And to this we may add that he lived in the Presence of God. It is the realization of God's Presence that gives that quiet calmness which makes our help doubly valuable. Living in that calm Retreat, we shall neither be hurried nor indolent. The one is impossible when we remember that with Him the future is as clear as the past; the other is impossible when we think of the unceasing energy of God as expressed in the words "My Father worketh hitherto and I work"; and of the coming "night when no man can work"—that long night with all our opportunities gone beyond recall, and the sense that we made so little of our life or ministry.

(3) *The Generosity of the King.*

We now pass on to another characteristic—generosity—which is so bound up with royalty as to pass

for a proverb. "Generous as a prince" we say of one who has been liberal, and it is commonly felt that those who dwell in "kings' houses" ought to show a freedom from all meanness and stinginess.

Our Lord's words and actions leave no doubt as to the value He attached to generosity. He bids us give in good measure, to lend without thought of repayment, to bestow our coat as well as our cloak on him that would take it from us. And what He bids us do He does Himself. Is He entertaining a large company of starving people, He gives them not merely enough, but more than enough, twelve baskets of broken meat bearing testimony to His generosity. Does a poor penitent beg of Him that he may be remembered when He comes to His Throne, He promises not remembrance, but fellowship, and this not at some future time, but on the very day he made his appeal. Does a poor palsied cripple seek relief for his body, He not only gives him this, but, what is far, far better, peace to his soul. Does Zacchæus seek but to get a sight of Him, He straightway, in spite of the public opinion of Jericho, lodges in his house. Do the disciples, for love of Him, leave their homes, they shall not only have thrones and high honors in the eternal future, but fathers, mothers, brethren, sisters, yea, even lands in this life.

His servants on whom He bestows the royal character must show the royal spirit. They may sometimes be obliged to say "Silver and gold have I none," but they will not therefore pass the beggar by ;

but with the Apostle's words, "Such as I have I give thee"—give that relief which is both possible and best.

And it may with much truth be said that as a class the clergy are liberal and generous with their means—yes, and oftentimes beyond their means. The visits they receive from the needy are a proof of their reputation in this respect. But the sacrifice of money is not the most difficult of those paths along which generosity points. The gift of time is oftentimes more valuable than that of money. The careful and patient consideration of what the case presented to us really demands, the labor involved in writing a full account to some friend who may help, or in searching out some person who may give what is most necessary, tax the spirit of generosity severely. It cannot be too often remembered that, whether we will or not, men will estimate the Church by what they find in us, and a little rigid economy, even in a trifling matter such as the recognition of small services, will often earn for the Church a bad name.

But, though so generous, our Lord gives no encouragement to extravagance. We must not mistake prodigality for generosity. Our Lord was never wasteful. "Gather up the fragments that nothing be lost" was as much a principle of His life as the giving "full measure and pressed down." Whilst He welcomes and commends the generosity of Mary, who poured the precious ointment upon His head, He forbids His disciples to give that which is holy to dogs. Covetous-

ness He constantly inveighs against, but when He would depict the sin that most commonly leads men astray, He gives as an illustration the son who *wasted* his substance in riotous living. And if waste be hateful, still more must debt be. "Owe no man anything" was a lesson that St. Paul learned through the Church, which, like her Head, ever set before man the duty of freedom from every obligation save that of love. It must often be difficult for the majority of the clergy to maintain the dignity of the Church and yet keep out of debt; but the outward setting of the Church is of far less importance than the moral uprightness which is never so noble as when it is straitened. We have known of clergy whose ability and kindness were widely recognized, but whose influence was gone in consequence of the debts they owed to their parishioners.

(4) *Personal Tenderness.*

Another royal characteristic is personal tenderness. This is ever a virtue of the best kings and queens. We all remember the story of Queen Victoria's graciousness to the first Bishop of Melanesia when he was a little boy, personally saving him from being trodden under foot by her horses in some great crowd at Windsor; and a story is told of thoughtful tenderness that led her not only to grant a personal interview, but to appear in state to a little boy who had found her handkerchief, and could not be persuaded to give it to any one but herself.

This regard for the individual was always prominent in our Lord's dealings with men. Perhaps it might be true to say that He never healed two people in quite the same way. There was no wholesale treatment. A word was sufficient for one, whilst a touch was necessary for others. Some were healed at once, others gradually; some publicly, in the crowd, others privately, apart from it. Some were forbidden to talk about their blessing; others were commanded to tell their friends of it. This variety of method was doubtless due to the fact that He adapted the means to the chief end He had in view, which was that of persuading the sufferer that He not only knew the character of the disease, but that He cared for the patient. So, with the blind He would touch their eyes, with the deaf their ears; the unclean leper He would touch. In this way He linked Himself on, as it were, to the individual, aroused his faith and confidence, and made him feel He was not only his Physician, but his Friend. The same personal care leads Him to give the child back to her parents and the young man to his mother. Though their personal relation to Him was to be supreme, it was not to be forced, nor was it to disturb unnecessarily the relations of father and son, mother and daughter. Surely in all this there is much to be pondered over and learned. That individual love of the Good Shepherd which knows all the sheep by name, which never allowed the interests of the masses to swallow up the interests of the one, which singled out the poor

widow amongst the wealthy, the publican amongst the aristocratic Pharisees—that is much needed by us all. Our people are treated too much as congregations. We seek to heal them in crowds; the power of the individual touch is not felt. We are ever building larger and larger churches to accommodate such congregations as no single man can possibly deal with individually. And yet it is difficult for the Rector, to whom the care of souls is committed, to delegate this responsible work to his curates. The spiritual needs of any soul are too delicate to be dealt with by any but men of experience; those who are learning their experience are obviously unfitted for the work of direction. Sermons, valuable as they are, are of too general a character to give the peculiar help the individual needs, and whilst most useful in awakening confidence in the preacher, yet need to be followed up by that personal application which the man of years can generally give. Perhaps some will say that there is no such need in the average congregation, or that it is confined to so few as to be easily satisfied; but no one who has known anything of the life of a great city will deny that the moral problems of the social and business relations of modern life are so complicated that it is difficult, even for any one who wishes, to live the Christian Life as expressed in the New Testament without wounding a sensitive conscience. A morality that suits the desk very well would excite wonder in the pulpit, and the principles that govern

and are admitted by people in society would be felt to be grievously out of place in Church. Gross sins are admitted as being necessary either for health or for economy, and the marriage relation is regarded as having no higher end than mutual convenience, and therefore to be severed as soon as that end fails to be served. So men and women who are members of our congregation, and communicants who are delighted with our sermons and instructions, are yet living without the Peace of God because of some sin which nothing but the personal application of God's grace will remove. But, further, this individual work needs much time and thought. It cannot be disposed of in a quarter of an hour. We need spiritual judgment to diagnose the disease, and patient courage to suggest the needed remedy. Again, not only in cases of spiritual sickness, but in those of sorrow, depression, and ill health, or of joy and some great expected happiness, there is needed the added stimulus which the Church knows so well how to give. The letter, the photograph, the small gift, the personal visit, the earnest prayer, all these may lift the sorrows and joys of men out of earth's atmosphere into that of heaven. Let us remember how much letters have done for us—*e. g.*, the New Testament letters—how we treasure the sacred picture given us at some sacred season or when suffering some trial, how the prayers of friends beside our bedside stand out still to-day in all their freshness, how the friendly grasp of the hand, the cheerful smile, gave

us hope when thick clouds were about us, and, so remembering, go forth to do unto others as they have done to us. It is a Royal work, and one that specially befits the Princes of God's Israel. The means are poor in themselves, merely water and clay, but in His hands they become rich in blessing.

(5) *Courageous Patience.*

The last Royal characteristic that we shall note is that of courageous patience. It is the part of a king to meet difficulties—nay, even apparent defeats—with courage and cheerfulness. President Lincoln met the crisis which was inevitably forced upon him with consistent bravery, “I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me—and I think He has—I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but the truth is everything.” So all those who have been worthy of their Royal position have acted.

This virtue comes out plainly in the Life of our King. Places and people fail Him, but He shows no signs of depression or bitterness. Chorazin and Bethsaida were the scenes of mighty works which would have brought even guilty Tyre and Sidon to repentance; Capernaum, His own city, where He lived for the most part during His ministry, had seen sights which would have converted even Sodom and Gomorrah; yet there was no sign in any one of these great cities of any general desire to follow the teaching of Christ. His work there, according to

human standards, was a failure. Words such as none other spake, works such as none other did, availed nothing. And how did He regard the contemptuous indifference of these great cities? With thankfulness. "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight" (St. Matt. xi. 26). The Divine law was best and wisest. That the wealthy, cultured, and great should reject His message whilst the simple accepted it was a matter of congratulation. The success of His work was always clear before Him. He could see the little seed growing up into a great tree, the leaven leavening the whole lump, and was quite content to wait. The kingdom came not with observation, but though invisible to the worldly eye, it was there, and men were pressing into it.

It is thus that the Priest-King must meet the inevitable disappointments and failures incidental to all spiritual work. We have done our best, yet the mass of the people are alienated. Well, better so than that they should be crowding the Church without repentance. Christ's methods are slow, but they succeed in the end. Success is never even doubtful. The sowing in tears of disappointment will be certainly followed by reaping in joy. Our duty is to be courageous and confident and to fear chiefly that apparent success which is not in accord with the Divine laws.

DEVOTIONS.

Blessed be Thine eyes, brighter than the sun which Thou didst mercifully lift up on the multitudes that came to Thee ; for whom Thou didst so tenderly care that Thou couldest by no means suffer them to go to their homes fasting ; but didst on two occasions, with a few loaves and small fishes, by a great miracle, more than abundantly satisfy thousands.

Blessed be Thy venerable hands which Thou didst gladly stretch forth over sick and suffering poor, and by the touch of Thy sacred Body didst at once drive from them every infirmity and disease.

Blessed be Thy most beautiful feet, which often, soiled with dust and weary in work for the salvation of souls, bore Thee hither and thither up the mountain side, and along the valley path, as Thou sowedst plenteously the Word of Life.

Raise me up, O Lord, from the bed of sloth, that I may go on ever increasing in virtue. Make me to walk straight in the way of Thy commandments, and strengthen my enfeebled hands unto diligent labor.

O God, who hast given me many opportunities of doing Thee service, give me grace to make use of them all, and to strive continually to do good in my generation. Keep me from sloth, which would expose me to temptations, enfeeble my mind, destroy my usefulness. Make me ever sensible of the evil of delaying work, so that whenever I am called to give an account of my labors to my Great Master, I may not be found an unprofitable servant.

VI.

THE OX OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE PRIEST."

MEDITATION.

The Sacerdotal Character.

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: . . . So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.—*Hebrews v. 1, 5, 6, 7.*

“*Taken from among men*”—He not only became
(1) Man by the Incarnation, but He lived and
Its Basis. worked as a man amongst men, became familiar with human thoughts and ways, experienced their temptations and trials, and so became the High Priest of Humanity. My priesthood also must be as broad as humanity, full of sympathy with all its needs and difficulties.

“*Ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that*
(2) *he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for*
Its Purpose. *sins*”—This the one purpose of the priesthood: not self-seeking, not self-glorification, but the salvation of mankind. So He, our Great High Priest, “*glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest.*” So far as the world could see, He had none of the pretensions to priesthood. He was not of the tribe of Judah,

and exercised no priestly functions in the Temple, yet He absolved men from their sins and offered the priceless sacrifice of Himself for their redemption. Take heed, O my soul, that in thy care for the symbols of thine office thou forget not its great purpose. Think not of them save as they serve the work. As it was with Him so with thee : the real life of thy Priesthood must be hidden, and its chief expression self-sacrifice.

"He offered up prayers and supplications with strong

(3) *crying and tears unto Him that was able*
 Its Work. *to save Him from death"*—The offering of

the Great High Priest was not something outward with which He had no concern, not like that of bullocks or goats with whose dying cries the priest might feel no sympathy, but His own Spirit, His own Life, accompanied with crying and weeping for those who would not receive the blessing He sought to give them. So, too, in the offering of the Eucharist I must be identified with it both in will and action ; I must bring something to it, and at least intercede for the needs of my people with earnest prayers if, alas ! the heart be too hard for tears.

I will strive to realize more deeply the needs of the
 Resolution. suffering members of my flock and offer for
 them daily Intercessions.

VI.

THE OX OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE PRIEST."

The Priestly Office.

"A gospel to be preached; a kingdom embodying it to be built up; but first a Life to be laid down." "The real truth is that while He came to preach the Gospel, His chief object in coming was that there might be a gospel to preach." In such statements we see the importance of that aspect of our Lord's Life which is given us by St. Luke—that of the Priest—the great part that the Atoning Life of self-sacrifice represented by "the Ox" has played in bringing home the truth of God to men's lives. Without the human side man would know nothing, without the regal side his personal life would never have developed, but without the priestly side he would have been lost.

And yet important, essentially necessary as this work of the Priest is for the restoration of mankind, what a hateful sound the word itself has to many ears! what prejudices it excites! what a bad history it suggests! Not only had it a bad record in the life of the heathen priesthood, which fattened itself

on lies and hypocrisy, and in that of the Jewish priesthood from the days of Hophni and Phinehas to that of Caiaphas the High Priest, but also, alas ! in that of the Christian Priesthood, which has had in its ranks men, if they could be called such, like Cæsar Borgia. Is it any wonder that with such a history men should abhor not only the name of Priest, but his chief action, "the offering of the Lord" (1 Sam. ii. 17)? Can we be surprised that "craft" was fastened on to it to depict the lowest kind of selfish cunning? Can we be astonished that many priests themselves prefer any other title than that one which marks their office most clearly? They fear that men are associating with it ugly characteristics abhorrent to their soul.

And yet the word lives on, and will to the end of the world. Nay, at a time when it was most degraded, there is no suggestion that either the name or the office it marked should be abandoned; but, on the contrary, the promise is made in express terms, "I will raise Me up a faithful Priest that shall do according to that which is in Mine heart and in My mind: and I will build Him a sure house; and He shall walk before Mine anointed for ever." ¹ As we know, this promise was fulfilled in Him whose Priesthood we are bidden to closely examine.² And He, the Head of the line, did not close it. St. Peter speaks of the Church as "*a holy priesthood*," St. John as a "*Kingdom of Priests*," and this language of Apostles has been adopted by writers ever since. Our Church, as

¹ 1 Sam. ii. 35.

² Heb. iii. 1

we know, not only has a Service for the Ordering of Priests, in which the Deacon is ordered to "the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God," but in her services she lays some emphasis upon the office by distinguishing its duties from those of the Diaconate.

And in these modern days the word has had a strange advocate in the person of Thomas Carlyle, who, in his lectures on "Heroes and Hero Worship," has chosen, after depicting the Hero as Divinity and Prophet, to portray him as Priest. We might have supposed that he meant something quite different to that which the Church would understand by the word. But not at all. "The Priest," according to Carlyle, "presides over the worship of the people, is the Uniter of them with the Unseen Holy . . . he guides them heavenward by wise guidance through this earth and its work. The ideal of him is that he too be what we can call a voice from the Unseen Heaven, interpreting even as the Prophet did, and in a more familiar manner unfolding the same to men."

Now, this does not differ essentially from the definition given by the Roman Catholic writer Estius: "It is the office of a Priest to mediate between God and men, to confirm compacts between them by offering sacrifice, and by his offices to provide that men become partakers of the Divine Offices." Or from that of the Protestant Grotius: "It is the Priest's office to be in God's stead to the people and

the people's stead to God." Or from that of our own Bishop of Durham: "It is the part of the Priest to establish a connexion of man with God, and, secondarily, of man with man." The layman and the Bishop, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, all understand the same thing by the word, and all feel also its permanent associations with the life of mankind. As the idea of kingship, however expressed, is necessary to the progress of society, so, too, that of Priesthood. Let us not then be ashamed of the Order in which it has been expressed—an Order whose long list of names contains some of the greatest in human history. Nay, let us rather try to redeem it from all the false and poor conceptions that have gathered round it, and demonstrate afresh in our own lives its beauty and dignity. We shall consider it in its two aspects—the Divine and Human—the Priest in his life towards God, the Priest in his life towards man.

PART I.

*The Priest in his Life towards God.**(a) The Priest's Preparation.*

In the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told many things about the Priest, not the least important of which is that "he is taken from among men," and has had a real human experience, knowing what it is to be "compassed with infirmity." This, that he must be human, might at first seem to

be a consideration scarcely calling for any attention, and yet many a priesthood has been a failure because it has lacked the elements of true humanity. There is something very significant that our Lord's preparation for the Priesthood took place in Nazareth and in the carpenter's shop. His life at home with His elder half-brothers and sisters, and in the village where His daily task brought Him into contact with all kinds of people, was in constant touch with men. So, tried in all the ordinary ways by which men are tried, by the weaknesses and sins of others, by their bad temper, idleness, ill-natured gossip, rough coarseness, and, above all, by their hard, dull unspirituality, He became personally acquainted with their needs, which formed the subject of His unceasing prayers. He of course needed not any preparation for the office of His High Priesthood, but chose this that by His example He might teach us what was most important.

So we ask ourselves as we look back on the time before our ordination whether we can in any true sense be said "to be taken from among men." Jesus Christ waited till He was thirty before He began His Ministry, and yet we, with only a small experience of what the life of men really is, are impatient to hurry over one of the most precious years of our life, that of the Diaconate—precious because it should give us something of that experience of the world which in after years we shall sorely need. The acquaintance with the sick, poor, and impotent

people of the parish to which our duty as Deacon calls us, will, or at least ought to, give us that sympathy with suffering Humanity which is essential to the life of a Priest; and not sympathy only, but a readiness of resource, a wise and gentle manner, a strong, courageous spirit, which, though it may feel nervous, never yields to cowardice. The Priest must first be a man, a man in sympathy with the ways of men; knowing not only their language, but their thoughts and intentions; having experience of their temptations, trials, and difficulties; realizing the particular hindrances and obstacles which other men, young and old, find in their profession, trade, or business. And this because his work will lie amongst men. He is to offer for men, and how can he do this unless he knows what they most need? From this it is obvious that a seminary training and a large acquaintance with theological books are not entirely adequate. Starting out with but these is like the doctor starting out without a hospital training. Hence the Church in her wisdom compels at least a year's preparation for the Priesthood, and, as we have noticed, prescribes as one of its chief duties that of seeking out the sick and poor—a most valuable introduction to the life of the Priesthood, the chief element of which is sympathy.

(b) The Priest's Call and Conviction of Sin.

For thirty years our Lord prepared Himself, and then the call came for the Christ to be endowed with

the Priesthood, for, as the inspired writer says, "Christ glorified not Himself to be made a high priest ; but He that spake unto Him, ' Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee ' " ; as He saith in another place, " Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." * The call came through the mission of the Baptist, to whom the Lord at once repaired that in the waters of Baptism He might receive the consecration of His Father. The place and time were alike strange. The place was Jordan, whose waters were now being used for the Baptism of Repentance ; the time was one of those crowded days when " the whole land seemed moved to give up its sinners to the discipline of repentance ; the whole city poured out its evil livers to the new and austere guide of penitence." Why should He receive the Priesthood then and there ? From His own words it would seem as though He wished to begin His Ministry with that satisfaction of the Divine law which was made by the confession of sin. " Before descending into the river," writes Professor Godet, " the converts who came to John for Baptism made confession of their sins to him. Jesus presenting Himself, like any other Israelite should have done the same. In what did His confession consist ? If there is a human feeling alien to the heart of Jesus—and there is one, and one only—it is that of penitence. He made a confession like Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, laying before God the sins of the nation,

* Heb. v. 5.

and humbling Himself for them in its name; but with this difference—that Jesus, in using the word Me, did not use it with any sense of personal participation in the general sinfulness, but only under the influence of the profoundest sympathy. . . . This was the spectacle which, a little later, moved John the Baptist to utter these sublime words, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.’ He had recognized in Jesus, on the day of His Baptism, that sacred Victim Who, while separating between Himself and sin by a profound abyss as far as His will was concerned, was at that same moment making the sin of the whole race His own, in respect of solidarity between Himself and them.” It was after this confession that the heaven was opened, the voice heard saying, “This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,” and the Dove seen abiding upon Him. The humiliation was followed by a great exaltation.

It is not otherwise with the Priest of God. The servant is not greater than his Master. The Valley of Humiliation must be entered before the vision of God can be seen or the sense of sonship received. We must feel with Isaiah, “Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips.” In our measure we ought to know something of the Slough of Despond, and this not merely in the recognition that the work is altogether beyond our powers, but that we are too sinful to have anything to do with it. The nearness to God which our ordination emphasizes should bring

about "a new and more exacting standard of sin and holiness; such as would lead us to refer to . . . sins of temper or of self-assertion in terms which the blunted sensibilities of men of the world only apply to the grossest acts of wickedness, to cry with the Saint of old, 'I have heard of Thee, by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.'"¹

We know indeed that there are some men who would consider this a very morbid condition for one who is entering upon the joys of the ministerial life. With them—and they are respectable, right-minded people, fulfilling their every-day duties to their families and to society with a sufficiency for which the world speaks well of them—any passionate agitation about the state of their souls they consider unreal and affected; but, as a man of letters with no pretensions to be a religious teacher rightly adds, "such men may be amiable in their private life, good neighbors and useful citizens, but be their talents what they may, they could not write a 'Pilgrim's Progress' or ever reach the Delectable Mountains, or even be conscious that such mountains exist."² Now, there are perhaps few that could tell the story of the soul as Bunyan has done; but alas for that Priest who has had no vision of the Delectable Mountains, who has not been able to catch the sounds of the

¹ Cf. Liddon's "Life of E. B. Pusey," p. 98.

² Froude's "Life of Bunyan."

Better Land ; alas for that Priest who, when brought face to face with a soul under conviction of sin, knows so little of his own inner life as to be unable to offer any help beyond a recommendation of change of scene or climate ! It may be that we cannot feel about our own sin as the Psalmists have done, it may be that we cannot yet use the words of the Saints in our confessions of sin, it may be that we are still far from feeling with John Keble that “ self-aborrence is a duty, a necessity, and a joy ” ; but we can at least avoid the spirit of self-complacency, the spirit which urges us to be thinking about marriage, settling in, and the outward comforts of our expected sphere of work when we ought to be sounding the depths of our own soul. And can we not do more ? If we find our spiritual condition generally hard and insensible to the promptings of the Holy Ghost, if our sense of personal sinfulness is unreal, can we not, ought we not, to at once take counsel with some holy man of God who may direct us in the paths of penitence, lead us to the waters of repentance ? Is not Christ in that significant “ *us* ” ? “ It becometh *us*,” not “ Me,” joining all His Priests with Himself, and at least suggesting that they too should fulfil all righteousness, as He did, by submitting to the discipline of Penitence. Such at least has been the way of the Saints of God, however different their schools of thought may have been. They may not all have expressed themselves in the same way, but all, whether it be Charles Simeon or Edward Pusey, James Han-

nington or John Keble, John Wesley or Lancelot Andrewes, went into the Valley of Humiliation, into the Waters of Repentance, and so were able to preach the Gospel of Repentance to others, having realized it in their own experience. Clergy are everywhere complaining that their congregations have little or no sense of sin ; it may be that they themselves have yet to learn its shame and bitterness.

So much for ourselves. The Example of our Lord carries us further. If we are faithful priests, we carry not our own sins only, but those of our own people. Here is one who is grieving the Church of God by drunkenness, another by covetousness, another by pride of intellect or birth. These sins, it is possible, are never confessed to God by those who daily commit them. The Priest takes them to God. Then, again, there is generally some one sin that besets the parish as a whole ; perhaps it is self-complacency, or meanness, or indifference to His worship. This we take to our God, not in the spirit of pride, but deep abasement ; take it daily in the words of the General Confession ; and so, like Ezra, it may be that we bring upon our people the power of the Holy Ghost, convicting them of their sins. Our devotion stirs theirs, our penitence moves theirs. " Now, when Ezra had prayed and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children, for the people wept very sore " (Ezra x. 1).

(c) The Priest's Discipline.

From Jordan Jesus was *driven* by the Spirit into the wilderness. *Driven*, for His delight was to be with the sons of men. He never left them save but this once for any length of time. He would not have withdrawn Himself now but by the constraining power of the Holy Ghost. He went away for forty days, the number being, as Archbishop Trench has told us, the signature of penalty, of affliction, of the confession or punishment of sin (see Gen. vii. 4, 12; Num. xiv. 33; Deut. xxv. 3). So Moses confessed the sin of his people for forty days, and Ezekiel bears the transgression of Judah for forty days. The period being one of penitence, necessarily calls for fasting, our Lord showing by His self-endured chastisement of the Body His shame and horror for the sins of the flesh by which men are defiled.

There is much that is very suggestive here to the Priest. In the first place, we note our Lord's retreat in the wilderness is after His endowment with the Priestly Office. It presents a striking contrast to the days that so often follow our ordination—days of travel, worry, settling in, or active work, the Priest not seldom going forth on the very day of his ordination to make proof of his ministry. So much that might have been preserved is lost, the sense of commission is weakened, and the awe on being invested with the awful supernatural powers of the priesthood dulled.

And, secondly, we consider the self-imposed discipline of Christ. How much that has to say to the Priest! It is not simply a duty to the body that it may be a fitting instrument for the sacred duties that will fall to it, but it is here specially shown as "a sign of mourning, an expression of sorrow and penitence." Fasting, then, is a "sign of sorrow which we may believe is precious in God's sight. Just as when a man has heard bad news he cannot eat, it turns him sick, so in fasting we try to reproduce the involuntary result of sorrow in a voluntary way, and endeavor to make ourselves feel that sensation which sorrow, if it were real, would tend to produce. The sight of a Saviour suffering, and of a world's sin, the remembrance of the sins of the parish committed to our care, even more the thought of our own sins, should all tend to give point to fasting, while we feel that in the presence of the great mysteries which gather round sin and the Atonement, fasting is at least an attitude of reverence." Now, the Fridays, the Ember Days, and Lent give special opportunity and help for such expression of sorrow. We can then indulge our desire to express our shame for sin by self-denial without occasioning remark, for even the world is now beginning to expect that the followers of the Crucified will fast on Fridays and in Lent.

Thirdly, let us not pass by the feature of silence which characterized our Lord's life in the wilderness, which is perhaps as important in its teaching as

¹ Newbolt, "Speculum Sacerdotum," p. 63.

His fasting. By this He atoned for "the idle, careless, and unscrupulous use of the great gift of speech that marks, alas! the life of us all. Think of the injustice, the pain, the anxiety, the anger, that spring up round reckless talk; think of the confusion and uncertainty that come by inaccurate repetition of inaccurate reports; think of the loosening of mutual trust, the loss of real interest, the rarity of thorough sympathy, because one has to doubt the justice, the trustworthiness of so much current talk; think of the lowering of the standard of truth," and then feel the need not only of His silence which marked the end as distinctly as the beginning of His Ministry, but of His sympathy with it by His voluntarily entering upon it as occasion offered. The late Archbishop of Canterbury told the Head-masters of the great English Public Schools during their Quiet Day how he had on one occasion submitted himself during a retreat to the rule of silence with much prejudice against it, but was afterwards constrained to express his sense of its value. But if we do it, let us do it not merely because of its advantages, but, as our Blessed Lord did it, as an act of atonement for the sins of speech.

And, lastly, we call to mind the Discipline of Temptation, the most mysterious aspect of the Forty Days in the wilderness. If He, our Captain, has met the Tempter's power, let us not fear to encounter it when we are led by the Spirit of God to meet it. It may be that with our humblest parishioner we

may be called on to face real want, to be really pinched for some of the necessities of life, and that to us the alternative may be proposed of Trust in the bare word of God or action which means disloyalty to Him; it may be that an opportunity is given us of creating a great impression by some startling act on our part, and so in a moment gaining that confidence of the Parish which otherwise can only be won by much suffering; it may be that we can disarm serious opposition by a very trifling departure from the road of strict devotion to the honor of God. These crises of faith may come upon us; we may feel sorely troubled and harassed, and much pulled down in our spiritual strength, through the poisonous atmosphere of the Tempter; but let us remember that Temptation is the price we must pay for the unspeakable blessing of helping others. "A High Priest tempted in all points like as we are" is the model of our Priesthood. A Priest without experience of temptation would be like a doctor who had never known illness. Nay, further, it is only through temptation successfully resisted that we win virtue. As the savage feels, when looking upon his prostrate victim, that his foe's strength has passed into him, so the saint, as in the might of the Spirit he conquers some hideous form of evil, knows that the victory has brought him that strength which made the temptation so fascinating. As has been well said, "the wilderness is the place where the Church's saints have been formed. They have become strong in the Lord and in

the power of His might, not by being shielded from temptation, but by meeting its fiercest assaults.’’

(d) *The Priest's Offering.*

(1) *In Fellowship.*

We have seen our High Priest confessing and bearing sin. We now contemplate Him as He offers for sin. It is surely full of significance that His first offering is in fellowship with men. It is as though from the very outset He would associate them with Him. As in the confession for sin He said, “It becometh Us,” so in the offering for sin His language is, “With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” He wishes to bring others into fellowship with Him in that great act so far as is possible. It is true, as we shall see, that He was obliged to tread the wine-press alone, that none of the people were with Him, that the help that was done upon earth He did it Himself; but yet some communion with Him was possible even in the act of the mystical breaking of His Body and the shedding of His Blood, and to this He invites them with much longing. We see the High Priest of Humanity lifting up the great sacrifice which is to redeem the world, but in union with Nature, whose fruits He uses; with the Jewish Church, whose great service of sacrificial Thanksgiving is made the foundation of the Eucharist, and with the Apostles, whose participation He lovingly

invites. So here there is a note of triumph running through it all. The exhortations are of a peculiarly uplifting character. He is going to leave them, but they will be blessed by His going. In the world they will have trouble, but let them be of good cheer, for the world is conquered. In the Father's house are many mansions; had it not been so He would have told them. So encouraged, stimulated, and uplifted, they break forth into the great Hymn of Praise, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious: because His mercy endureth forever. Let Israel now confess that He is gracious, and that His mercy endureth forever."

The Priest also makes his offering in fellowship with his people. The Eucharist, in which the prayers, aspirations, and hopes of his people are gathered up, in union with which alms and oblations are offered; the Eucharist, the very language of which attests this fellowship—"we, *Thy humble servants*, do celebrate and make here before Thy Divine Majesty with these Thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto Thee, the Memorial Thy Son hath commanded us to make"—is the Priest's chief joy and comfort. However often he may feel that he is standing alone, however often he may feel solitary, depressed, out of heart, here in this service with the faithful few gathered about him he feels the exhilaration which comes of assured sympathy. He knows he is engaged in a tremendous Act, that of offering up his own life and the life of the parish in union with the Life of the Lamb, Whom he

sees standing as It had been slain, standing marked with all the signs of that great sacrifice still fresh upon It; but the presence of others sustains him. And this human presence and sympathy does more. It quickens his faith in the Divine Presence; prepares him, as it were, for the great manifestation in "the breaking of bread"; a sense of victory and triumph comes over him as he realizes that the same Blessed Jesus who stood by St. Paul and said, "Be of good cheer," is with him too, giving the same encouragement and assisting him to make the offering perfect. So he throws into that Great Oblation, in which everything seemed to be lost, his own life and that of his people, praying that the Father may accept it as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. How important, if this is to be the spirit of his Eucharist, that it should be expressed in warm and earnest tones! How necessary, whether there be few or many, that the celebration should always be "high," helped, where possible, with the uplifting strains of music! How necessary, too, that it should be offered in the spirit of lowliest penitence, expressed, when possible, in the ancient rule of fasting! How can any one be in fellowship with that act of supreme sacrifice and oblation who comes fresh to it from indulgence of mind or body? Does it not demand as essential elements of preparation, silence, abstinence, and such lowly spirit of devotion as was indicated by the washing of the disciples' feet? So the Priest teaches himself and his flock. Whilst

offering every inducement to all to join with him in making the great oblation of body, soul, and spirit, he is so much concerned with the spirit in which they should make it that he enjoins upon all repentance, self-denial, and brotherly love. And the Eucharist being so much to him, he has it as often as the devotion of his people will allow. He cannot act in this apart from them. But there are special occasions when the spirit of thanksgiving or sacrifice runs high with one or another of his flock, or in the parish generally, or there is some great need, individual or parochial, calling for special intercession; these he uses as helps in showing how the Eucharist answers every experience of life. So gradually in the mind of the Parish it becomes naturally the great act of devotion and worship, and people are led to feel that every other service is feebler in its ability to express and interpret as well as satisfy every human need, when set beside this alone founded on the Lord's command.

(d) The Priest's Offering.

(2) In Isolation.

From the Church of God our Lord passed into the loneliness of the dark shades of the garden of olives. And there none can follow Him. None can share His thoughts, none can even sympathize, for none can understand the great Mystery of His sorrow. Nor can we hope to penetrate into the heart of that

great anguish of spirit which expressed itself in the Bloody Sweat. But we do know this, that our Lord was tempted, for when He was at the place He said to the three Apostles who were allowed to go as far as the garden with Him, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation." And we can well imagine that the temptation was to stay the progress of those events which would inevitably lead to the Crucifixion. Had our Lord chosen, He knew that all could be prevented; not simply all that concerned Himself—the Scourging, the Cross, the Death—but, what was still more bitter, all that concerned others. The suicide of Judas, the hypocrisy and the blasphemy of the High Priest, the false and lying action of the Jewish Church, the cowardice of Pontius Pilate, the cruelty of the people, the desertion of the disciples, the denial of St. Peter, the grief of His Blessed Mother, all these would follow if the Tragedy which had now begun were not stayed, and these things would be done by His own people, by those whom He came to save, by those to whom He had ministered. As Bishop Westcott says, "the burden of shame might in itself have been cheerfully borne, but when the shame which was inflicted witnessed to the degradation of a beloved race, each pang was as the death-blow of a great hope." Hence the appeal, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done."

We hope it may not be considered presumptuous to suggest that the shadow of that great Agony, so

far—and perhaps so far alone—as it may be viewed as a temptation, sometimes falls upon the Priest. He too passes from the Celebration, where holy fellowship, the strains of uplifting music, the encouraging words of the Gospel, and, above all, the Sacred Presence of his Lord, promise victory and ultimate triumph, to the solitude of his own study, where the conflict, which he knows to be imminent, looks very different. He sees on the one side peace and quiet; on the other, storm and tempest. On that letter which he must now write everything depends.* On the one hand, success, popularity, and the congratulations of his friends on his having got over a very puzzling difficulty; on the other hand, failure, hatred, abandonment, and loneliness. Nay, worse, the income will be reduced, the children's education curtailed, and perchance distrust creep into his own family. Why should he take this action which he knows will be so unpopular? Why offend the only people who can support the Church? A question of principle! But you cannot live on principles, says the Tempter. To repel the adulterer from Communion, to preach fearlessly the hated Truth, to write and refuse the proffered help because offered in the spirit of Simon as a bribe, to do this with hungry rivals on every side hoping to gain accession to their Churches—why must it be? Why not wait till the moral offender has been presented by some of the parishioners, why act on private information? Why not wait till the people have grown

to like the Truth? So the Tempter argues, and the Priest replies: Because I must, at all hazards, be true to myself; the matter is on my conscience. As Luther said in a like trial, "It is neither safe nor prudent to do aught against conscience. Here stand I; I can do no other; God help me." Yes, as Carlyle adds in his comment on this passage: "That is the greatest moment in the modern history of men," when, indeed, does he show higher strength than when, with disaster before him, he quietly offers up all he has and all he counts dear—his wife's happiness, which must be pierced through with a sword; his friend's confidence, which will be strained beyond bearing; his congregation, which will be scattered far and wide; his home comforts—when all are offered up? But he can do no other, so the letter is written, the irrevocable word is spoken, and the parish is in a blaze.

(d) *The Priest's Offering*

(3) *On the Cross.*

The sound of the approaching footsteps was the outward sign to our Lord that all was to be accomplished as predicted. From that moment His whole attitude is changed. There is no shrinking from the bitter cup, no appeal that it pass away if it be the Father's will. He takes it firmly with both Hands, as it were, and drains it to the very dregs. All is offered on the Altar of the Cross with superb

Majesty and Dignity. The words to Judas; the look which sent the rough mob backwards; the silence before the High Priest's Court, only broken by the short prophetic utterance of the great future coming in the clouds of heaven; the silence before Herod, and the brief, pointed colloquies with the Roman governor, which awed even his blood-stained conscience; the words to the holy women who bewailed Him; the refusal of the opiate; the seven great sayings—all showed "the complete and exhaustive concurrence in the Father's judgment upon sin" which He was bearing, all showed the divine strength in which He made the great offering. Hanging between earth and heaven, separated from men, and, so far as the sense of it went—though only so far—separated from God during the terrible darkness, He yet offered with a full consent the sacrifice of all to the Father.

It is not otherwise with the Priest. He is not above his Master. He goes forth from his solitude to his parish duties knowing that his action is the talk of the place. The local press is delighted with the opportunity of an increased sale. Coarse headlines give to the world an exaggerated version of that which the Priest faced in solitude. He notices friends avoid him, and those with whom he transacts necessary business speak shortly and sharply. Even those who can see his side consider he has made a great mistake, and talk of possible resignation. He is tried and condemned at the teas and dinner-tables of his parishioners, congregations are thin, choir-

men absent themselves, and the bolder ones walk out of Church. And then perhaps the anxiety and worry bring him to his bed. He is seriously ill. He is crucified, as it were, unable to move or think in great bodily pain. Man's abandonment, emphasized by weakness, seems to betoken God's abandonment. He can frame no prayers, find no comfort in the Scriptures, but yet holds himself still upon God, waiting, waiting, to pass through Death to Resurrection. For the Priest makes the offering in confidence. However much he may fear at times, yet, having made the offering, he does not wish to recall it. He believes in the redemptive power of suffering, and he has good reason to do so. People may think such a course mistaken, may hate it, but in their hearts they admire it. Worldly men, like the Roman centurion, see in it a feature of the Divine life. Bad men, like the penitent robber, are turned by it to seek salvation. The two or three who really understand are strengthened. The cowardly, like Joseph of Arimathæa, become brave and make an open profession of the truth that men have cavilled at. The Priest has made his offering, and already a new way is opened out towards God.

We have noticed an extreme case. Not all have to pass through such a fire as I have tried to describe. With some the Cross is simply suffering for the work's sake. Examples readily occur. The Bishop of Truro, speaking of the inner grace of the Apostolic Succession, told of a young

priest "who gave up his life in a poor district of London, his body worn out by ceaseless toil, his constitution sapped by pastoral zeal. He watched by the bed of a sick boy who refused all food and medicine except at the hand of this young curate. Two nights he sat up by that bedside, and at last the sacrifice was completed. The boy lived; the priest died. This bearing the burdens of others in our own hearts," the Bishop goes on to say, "this pouring out of ourselves on the altar of Christ and all else that made a man a priest, was drawn from the single priesthood of Jesus, the Bishop of souls."

(d) The Priest's Offering.

(4) In the Heavenly Places.

Our great High Priest passed away from the Cross to take the Life which He had won through death within the heavenly places. There in the highest heaven before the Throne stands a Lamb as it had been slain; not now the subject of cruel and wanton blasphemies, but the centre of universal adoration. Only one theme is the subject of the chorus of praise and glad thanksgiving of the spiritual Intelligence, that which is expressed in the words "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."^{*} He is now highly exalted, and given "a Name which is above every name; that at

^{*} Rev. v. 12.

the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth.”¹

And what are the characteristic features that mark the life of our great High Priest after the victory was won? Something we can tell from what the Gospels narrate of the Risen Lord. He does not take vengeance upon His enemies in the hour of His Triumph. He does not discard His cowardly followers. He does not make any great or startling display of power. He gives peace and a fresh commission to His Church, pardon to the disciple who denied Him, special help to the doubter, and fresh power to all who shall go forth in His Name.

The Priest, like his Master, emerges from the struggle triumphant. In some way or other the stand taken is vindicated, the principle contended for is approved, the Church that was so attacked begins to have a reputation which others that once were more flourishing envy. The tide turns. Success sweeps in like a flood, and the persecuted priest is the hero of the Diocese. How will he now behave? Success in some ways is more difficult to bear than failure. We see Lacordaire on his knees before the crucifix with the tears streaming down his face, trying to withstand the delirious effects of those great sermons at Notre Dame crowded with the intelligence and fashion of Paris, and we feel that his position is the right one. We can only learn from Jesus how

¹ Phil. ii. 9, 10.

to behave ourselves when we are suddenly exalted and find all men speaking well of us. And what do we learn ?

First, we notice His retirement. Only ten times in forty days did He appear, and in five out of these ten to individuals or small groups of individuals. So the Priest keeps himself, as it were, in the background. He is more reserved and quiet, keeps himself away from the great world that is now prepared to flatter him.

Secondly, we note that our Lord's chief thoughts are on the kingdom of God, "being seen of them forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." So, too, the Priest is occupied chiefly with plans for building up the parish life and developing it. He is not thinking of himself, of what returns he shall make to those who stood aloof or were openly hostile ; but how he can make the success which has come to him increase the efficiency of his work. He does not give up the workers that abandoned him, but shows them his confidence and trust by giving them their old duties back again ; those who still hang back, half doubting, he seeks to win. The depressed and faint-hearted he gently chides, showing from the Scriptures that no good work can be done without sacrifice. But His great joy is in the Eucharist and the services which are linked on to it. As the years go on he lives more towards God than towards man, or, to express it more truly, he spends more time in prayer and the

worship of God, having learned in his severe trial how efficacious they are. And so he progresses till the call comes to resign his charge to others and to go forth to that fuller life where there are offices which fittingly suit "the full-grown energies of heaven."

DEVOTIONS.

By the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation, by Thy holy Nativity and Circumcision, by Thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation, Good Lord, deliver us.

By Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat, by Thy Cross and Passion, by Thy precious Death and Burial, by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the Coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver us.

I bless and give Thee thanks, O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou great High Priest, for Thy manifold mercies to men, for Thy gifts of pardon to the penitent, Thy words of righteous anger to the obstinate, that they might turn unto Thee with true contrition ; but, above all, for the offering of Thyself upon the Altar, the Cross. Mercifully grant that I may always most thankfully receive this, Thine inestimable benefit, and daily endeavor myself to follow the blessed steps of Thy most holy life.

Collects for Good Friday and the Sunday before Easter.

The Hymn : "When I survey the Wondrous Cross."

VII.

THE OX OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE PRIEST."

MEDITATION.

The Great Commission.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.—*St. John xx. 19-23.*

“When the doors were shut where the disciples were
(1) *assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus*
The Disciples. *and stood in the midst”*—Here were men who had forsaken their Master in the hour of trial, and one who had thrice denied Him! “Afraid of the Jews,” because afraid of their conscience stained by sin. They had heard He was alive, but if He came what would He say to those who had been such false friends? How soon their fears are removed, for He appears and at once gives them that peace which will reassure them and make them feel that all is forgiven. I, too, have been cowardly, deserting Christ when things were said which ought not. I have no right to be trusted with any great office; but to me also come the words “Peace be unto

you." It is in the strength of that abiding assurance that I can exercise my ministry.

"As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you"—

(2) How strange! We know what a *Divine*
 The Commis- Mission *He* had, we know with what *au-*
 sion. thority *He* spake, what *authority* *He* ex-
 exercised both in loosing and retaining sins, and *this* *He*
 now gives to His Church to be used in His Name by
 her Priests. With what deep feelings the Apostles must
 have received their commission to be His ambassadors!
 And shall I, so unworthy as I am, take it as though it were
 a mere form of words? An ambassador of the King of
 kings—that is my position. Let me take good heed that
 I represent His Divine Majesty with dignity, firmness,
 wisdom, and infinite sympathy.

"He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive

(3) *ye the Holy Ghost"*—As the question arose
 Its Power. in their minds, "Who is sufficient for
 these things, these awful duties"? it was at once quieted
 by the stirring within them of the Holy Ghost. "*Our*
sufficiency is of God," was their answer. The Breath
 of the new Risen Life filled their whole being, and they
 felt that though it was but in earthen vessels, yet the
 treasure was there. So we, too, might well shrink from
 the awful responsibility of pronouncing in His Name the
 Absolution of sinners, were it not for the fact that *He*
 who gives the commission gives also at the same time
 grace to fulfil it.

Help me, O Lord, so to express the dignity of mine
 office that those whom I serve may always
 Aspiration. realize that it is not I but Christ who
 worketh in me.

VII.

THE OX OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE PRIEST."

The Priestly Office.

We have seen from the definitions of Priesthood laid down by theologians that the Priest's office is not simply one representing the people towards God, but also one representing God to the people. He is an ambassador charged with the tremendous responsibilities of binding and loosing as well as the blessed privilege of blessing. These duties are his because they belong to the great High Priest. We shall do here as we have hitherto done : first consider how He exercises these powers, and then learn principles for our own guidance.

PART II.

The Priest in his Life towards Man.

(a) The Ministry of Benediction.

This, naturally, is our first thought. Our Lord's whole life was a Benediction. That was, as He reminded the overzealous Apostles, St. James and St. John, the spirit in which He came and which they

were to show. "The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." That also was the purpose of His Father, "for God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (St. John iii. 17). So it is that the spirit of benediction, of gentle, loving treatment, of care for men's bodies as well as their souls, of interest in their daily joys as well as in their sorrow, is one that shines out through all His ministry. His first miracle was wrought to add to the joys of a country wedding; the first exercise of His ministry towards men was to adorn and beautify by His Presence that estate which is the foundation of family and national life. In the same spirit He takes the children into His arms, softly praying for them, gently blessing them. So, too, His attitude towards the sick and the sorrowing is one breathing out benediction in every expression. The loathsome leper feels the warm, sympathetic touch of the All Pure; the poor, fevered mother the glad welcome to new life in the hand stretched out to take her; the young man and the little girl, on opening their eyes again on the world, see in Him one whose delight it is to restore them to their friends.

So, too, His words as well as His actions. The first teaching begins with eight Benedictions, and the last concludes with the prayer that the great love with which the Father loves the Son may be known and felt by His disciples.

But He needed not to say anything. His Face

said far more than His words ; nay, when the words were hard, men relied on what they knew Him to be. The Apostles felt the difficulty stated by the Jews, " How can this Man give us His flesh to eat ? " They saw the defection they caused ; but if the thought of leaving Him ever occurred to them, the question at once arose, " To whom shall we go ? " And this same power of benediction which streamed forth from His face was felt by those who saw Him but for the first time. The Canaanitish mother, sorely distressed for her daughter, accepts teaching from Christ which, from any one else, would have aroused her worst feelings. He might imply by His words that she was but one of the dogs of the Gentiles, with no right to the children's bread, but His face belied any cruel interpretation of His words. He was not insulting her—no one could see His countenance, beaming with love and tenderness, and say that—but rather trying to teach her her real position in the sight of God. It is possible that she may have had opportunities of entering the covenant of God and had rejected them, and, therefore, felt with special force the rebuke ; but a rebuke from Him was more than a blessing from any one else, and so emboldened her to use her great argument, which so much rejoiced the heart of the Lord.

It was this spirit of benediction, felt in every look and word, that attracted the poor and outcast, the weak and sinful. They felt He would understand them and deal gently with them, and so, though

awestruck at the Majesty and Purity of His Presence, they would creep in whilst He was dining or surrounded by some crowd, and find secretly the comfort and strength which they knew to be in Him.

Now, this is the spirit of the true Priest of God. Like his Master, he delights in Benediction. Of the fourteen letters of St. Paul but one is found without a blessing at its commencement; and even this, written to men who had been nearly guilty of apostasy, concludes with one. So, in the same spirit he is constantly expressing his thankfulness for the improvement which he sees in his converts, their faith, love, knowledge of the Lord. Even those whom he feels obliged to reprove he first blesses. And that has been the mind of all God's saints, especially his whose translation to Paradise has left the whole Church mourning. The last scene in the life of the great Archbishop of Canterbury which the Bishop of Albany remembers, and for the memory of which he thanks God, was that of his turning in Lambeth Chapel towards his three grandchildren and giving them the blessing of peace, and the last that the Archbishop of Armagh recollects is the Apostolic salutation he gave to the Irish Church in his person. These are the things that live in people's memories. How far do we know anything of them? What a joy to take the infant into our arms and plunge him into the bath of regeneration! What a privilege that our lips should first officially pronounce that name which is written in the book of life! And yet how often, in the hurry and

rush of our life, are we disposed to look differently upon it! To us, tired with a long service, the vergers announces that country folk, living some distance from the Church, have brought a child to be baptized. How difficult then to feel the honor and blessing to which we are invited! How tempting to wish it were over! How poor the spirit we carry to it! And they whose child we bless in the Lord's Name, who have looked forward to the day and planned to make it possible, who have invited friends and incurred some ill-afforded expense in preparations, catch something of our spirit of officialism, and return home wondering whether it was necessary to make so much fuss about a mere form.

So, too, what a privilege to give the blessing of the Church to those who come to be married! But when the arrangements are being made in the privacy of our study, is there any effort on our part to persuade the betrothed to prepare by prayer for that touching threefold benediction which may mean so much to their lives?

"O Eternal God . . . send Thy blessing upon these Thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in Thy name. . . ."

"God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you. . . ."

"O God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, bless these Thy servants. . . ."

Do we try to lift the whole service out of its mere earthly surroundings and make all feel that, though

the outward details are only a form, yet they are a form for the *solemnization* of Matrimony; *i. e.*, for making it a solemn, serious, holy estate, to be entered upon with reverence and in the fear of God? "The blessing of the Church"—how glibly the words pass over our lips! and yet it is the blessing of the living Lord Jesus Christ.

The same spirit of benediction is to accompany us to the sadder duties of our ministry. In the touching office of Visitation of the Sick it is prescribed that the Priest shall say "Peace be to this house." It is this that the home then chiefly needs. Within there is anxiety, perhaps fuss and worry. The one thing necessary is quiet. And it is just this that the Priest is hoping to bring—the quiet of God. How careful then should he be so to make himself ready by prayer that he conveys this by his presence! No preaching, no presumption that he knows why God has visited His children. "Dearly beloved, *know this*, that Almighty God is the Lord of life and death and of all things to them pertaining, as youth, strength, health, age, weakness, and sickness." Wherefore, whatsoever your sickness is, know you certainly that it is God's visitation. Beyond this all is mystery whether the sickness is sent to try the patience for the example of others and that your faith may be found in the day of the Lord laudable, glorious, and honorable to the increase of glory and endless felicity, or whether it be sent for amendment of something that doth "offend the eyes of your

heavenly Father." The Priest goes not there as a judge, but as a friend, a helper, and a guide, leading to repentance, for in any case that is the path, whether for saint or sinner, along which the Peace of God comes.

There is no order in the service for Unction, but permission has been given by some Bishops within the Anglican Communion for the old rite with a view to recovery of health. It is difficult to see what objection can be urged against it if it be desired by the sick. We are inclined, however, to believe that the spirit of the Apostolic custom may be more usefully preserved in another way. It would appear that the use of oil in healing was sanctioned by our Lord (St. Mark vi. 13) and the Church (St. James v. 14), because it was the common remedy of the times. We know from Pliny, Celsus, Josephus, and other writers, that it was universally resorted to for all kinds of medicinal purposes. As then the sick were often inclined to believe that the oil, apart from God's blessing, would heal, so the Christian Church prescribed that it should be used with prayer. Hence the custom of blessing the oil that was brought to the clergy by the people on Maundy Thursday, and afterwards taken back by them for use in case of need. If this be the case, it would suggest that we should be faithfully observing the spirit of St. James' direction if the use of all medicine were accompanied by the prayers of the Church. There can be no question that, owing to the wonderful progress in medical

science, there is a disposition to believe in the efficacy of medicine apart from the Divine blessing; hence the common custom of sending for the Priest only after medical remedies have failed. If this be so, it would seem most desirable that people should be encouraged to seek for the Church's blessing on the medicine to be used for the recovery of the sick, a form for which should be provided and used. There is little doubt that such a use would be widely popular as encouraging the patient in the first stages of sickness, when hope does so much for health, and it would restore the priest to his proper position as bringing peace and quiet not when hope is lost, but when it is beginning to waver. Sometimes this blessing of the Church, *i. e.*, of the Living Christ, is readily perceived and acknowledged. A child whose life had been despaired of and who had recovered was congratulated by one of the three doctors attending her on the success of their remedies. "Oh, no," she said, quite simply, "it was not the medicines, but Mr. ——'s prayers," referring to the ministry of the priest who had been called in when life was supposed to have been lost.

This benediction of medicines for healing leads us to think of the benediction of the fruits of the earth before we receive them; the grace before meals, which is more than an act of thanksgiving, even a prayer that they may be for us all that God intended them to be.

We now pass on to the last Benediction, that of the Dead. In the hour of gloom and darkness, when the

consolations of the world seem hollow and vain, when flowers and pall seem only to hide the corruption which we know has already set in, when the spirit world seems so unreal and shadowy, and the earth the only substantial fact, then the Church boldly invokes a benediction on the departed. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors." She answers the half-pitying remarks of those who are strange to her faith, their "Poor so and so—gone at last," with the triumphant reply, "Nay, not 'Poor,' but 'Blessed' "—*Blessed* because delivered out of the miseries of this sinful world, Blessed because he is at rest, Blessed because he is in joy and felicity.

As we think of Benediction as the prevailing spirit of the Priest, we cannot help wishing that it were more continuously expressed. That Priest who is so downcast and gloomy as he walks to and fro from his Church is unconsciously denying his office, failing to recognize that God has sent him to the people amongst whom he ministers, as He sent His Son Jesus to *bless* mankind in turning away every one of them from their iniquities.

(b) The Ministry of Binding.

It is indeed sad that the Priest should exercise any other ministry than that of blessing; but as the curses of God on Mount Ebal were set over against the blessings on Mount Gerizim, so the Ministry of Binding is set over against the Ministry of Benediction.

It is possible, alas ! that the message of peace may be rejected, the blessing ridiculed, the authority of God's embassy despised. It is possible that men may set God's order at defiance, resist His ministry, take His holy things into their own hands, as Jero-boam and Uzziah did. It is from such a possibility that there arises the dread office of binding or retention of sins—an office better understood in the first days than now, an office brought into contempt by the light and frivolous use made of it in the middle ages. When popes and bishops pronounced anathemas against those who resisted their own selfish will rather than the will of God, when they cut off not individuals or parishes merely, not dioceses, but whole nations, from the means of grace because of a personal quarrel with the king, then the weapon, used with such tremendous force in early days, dropped powerless from their hands. Men laughed at the Church's excommunication. If that spirit is to some extent still abroad, it is well for us to remember that there was once a time, and it may come again, when the Apostolic delivery of the sinner to Satan for the destruction of the flesh produced even amongst the light-hearted Corinthians great fear, such anxiety, such endeavors to clear themselves free from blame, such indignation, such vehement desire, such fear, such zeal, such revenge,¹ that the Apostle, seeing the effect of the proposed discipline, at once relaxed it.

Now, this severer side of the priestly life was not

¹ 2 Cor. vii. 11.

developed in the days immediately succeeding the Resurrection ; it had its origin and source in the life and words of the great High Priest.

He it was who passed sentence on the guilty nation in the symbolic action of blighting the fig-tree, " No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And immediately the fig-tree withered away." So, too, at His word the national life drooped, and the Jewish Church, which was the mother of saints and prophets, poets and politicians, became barren and for nearly two thousand years has borne no fruit. (St. Matt. xxi. 19.)

He it was who invoked woe after woe on the religious and political guides of the nation, naming them as fools and blind, a generation of vipers, so bad that it seemed impossible that they could escape the judgment of hell. (St. Matt. xxiii. 13-34.)

He it was who bade His Apostles excommunicate the offending brother who refused to accept the judgment of the Church and treat him as an heathen man and a publican, assuring them that the awful sentence should be ratified in heaven. (St. Matt. xviii. 17.)

And He it was who gave to the Church, in the person of St. Peter, the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, bidding her use them for shutting as well as opening. And when the prophetic eye of St. John saw his Master years after, he saw Him as having with Him the key of David, possessing authority to shut as well as to open. (St. Matt. xvi. 19 ; Rev. iii. 7.)

So the Church, knowing herself to be endowed through her Head with this awful power, was led to exercise it. Ananias and Sapphira, bound by the word of St. Peter, give up the ghost, and Elymas, the sorcerer, bound by the word of St. Paul, loses his sight; and Alexander, the coppersmith, together with the false Hymenæus, are delivered unto Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. Nor has the Church, since Apostolic times, abrogated this power. Indeed, how could she, since it is not hers, but belongs to her Head? Invested with the present power of judging the world, as with the future of "judging angels," she has always, when she has remained true to her divine commission, passed judgment on men and things. As she has "loosed" in the name of the Lord, so also she has "bound." And even in our own branch of the Catholic Church the power of discipline has been preserved, though the reaction from Papal authority has led her priests to be somewhat timid in exercising it. It is ordered that if any members of the Church offend their brethren by any wickedness of life, that such shall be warned not to come to the Holy Communion; and that those betwixt whom the Priest perceiveth malice and hatred to reign shall not be suffered to be partakers of the Lord's Table till they be reconciled.

It is further ordered (Canon 13 of the American Church) that no minister, knowingly after due inquiry, shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has a divorced husband or wife still living, if

such husband or wife has been put away for any cause arising after marriage; and that no one who has been improperly married shall be admitted to Holy Baptism, Confirmation, or Communion, without reference to the Bishop of the Diocese.

It is further ordered that none shall be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he be confirmed or be ready and desirous to be confirmed; and that the office for the Burial of the Dead be not used for any unbaptized adults, any who die excommunicate, or who have laid violent hands upon themselves.

From these directions it is plain that there is not only the power of the keys within the Church, but that the clergy are expected—nay, commanded—to exercise it. And the directions cover so large a field that it is difficult to suppose that a priest will be so fortunate as to escape from the irksome necessity which the command implies.

It is, then, important to see how our Lord exercised it, and what directions He gave respecting its exercise.

(1) We know that it caused Him great pain.

Before sentencing the guilty city and nation to barrenness and desolation He wept over it, loudly lamenting the fact of its ignorance which was leading it to such a dreadful fate.¹ He did not feel the work of discipline to be the easy matter which some of those who have represented Him have supposed.

¹ St. Luke xix. 42.

If only the Church's rulers had been filled with His Spirit, had had their anathemas forced out of them, as it were, with grief and sorrow, these would have still had some of their old power! So, if unhappily the occasion may arise with us, for the exercise of discipline, to warn the offender off the holy ground, to refuse the precious pearls of the Gospel to one who cannot appreciate them, let us take heed how we do it. Let us make it perfectly plain that there is no personal feeling mixed up with it, that we are really sorry, that we would do anything that was right to avoid it, and then with prayer leave the issue with God. Those whom the Lord sentenced crucified Him. And the like spirit has been shown again and again. But, though it may arouse hostility and anger, and often fail in obtaining an immediate result, it is not always the case. At a gathering of clergy who were discussing the subject of discipline, the following testimony was borne to its blessing. A wealthy man, the one person of influence and power in the parish, had been warned off from the Holy Communion on the ground of adultery. In spite of this warning he presented himself on Easter Day. The Priest passed him by. Enraged, the excommunicate stood up and struck him in the face. Humbly and quietly he went on with his ministrations. In three months the man had repented, put away his sin, and was reconciled to the Church.

(2) Our Lord tells us that the offence, whether

contentious or vicious, is first to be told to the Church. "Tell it unto the Church, and (only) if he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."¹

It is the observance of this direction that prevents the personal element from being mixed up with it. The spirit of our Lord's command is expressed for us in the rubric that compels notice of every intended act of excommunication to be sent to the Bishop. We remember how careful St. Paul was to observe this rule. His sentence on the Corinthian offender runs in this way: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ *when ye are gathered together and my spirit* with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." It may be that we are obliged to act quickly before the case could be submitted to the Bishop. In this case it would seem that the communicants might be summoned and their opinion taken after earnest prayer, for it is premised that the offence is publicly known and already causing scandal.

All this is difficult we say; yes, nothing more difficult to-day, when nothing is kept secret or hidden; but we are stewards of the mysteries of God, and the chief thing expected and required of a steward is that he be faithful (1 Cor. iv. 2)—faithful to Him who entrusts him with His holy things, and faithful to those souls for whom he must give account in the Great Day.

¹ St. Matt. xviii. 17.

(c) The Ministry of Loosing.

It is with relief that we turn from the ministry of binding to the ministry of loosing. It was this that specially delighted the heart of the Son of God. In His first public sermon He declared it to be the very purpose and object of His Mission; He was "sent to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." And that there might be no possible mistake about the exercise of it, He takes advantage of a very public and crowded occasion not only to pronounce absolution, but to prove by a miracle His right to pronounce it. We all remember the scene, the house in Capernaum filled with a crowd which overflowed into the street, the palsied sinner being let down slowly from the roof to the feet of Jesus, the silent hush followed by the unexpected words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and then, when men are crying on all sides, "He blasphemeth! He blasphemeth!" the challenge, "Whether is easier?" emphasized by the words, "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, Arise and take up thy bed and go unto thy house."

It was clear that He had the power; but what is not so readily perceived is that He claims it for Himself as Son of Man, and specially emphasizes the earth as the sphere in which it is to be exercised. "The Son of Man hath power *on earth*." These

were the points which raised such eager criticism. His hearers were accustomed to absolution, given by God and in heaven, but here was absolution given by humanity in the Person of the Son of Man and on the earth. Our Lord does not give it as "the Son" or as "the Son of God," but as "the Son of Man," *i. e.*, as representing the whole race of man. The words naturally point to a continuance of this great blessing. Humanity having once exercised it, will continue to do so as long as it exists. The only question is how. So long as the Son of Man was on the earth absolution was confined to Him; but when He was about to pass away to the right hand of the Father He delegates it to the Church in the well-known words, "As My Father hath sent Me even so send I you." "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." And the Church has always exercised it through her Bishops and Priests. Imitating her Divine Master, she sends forth her Priests with the very same words as He sent her forth, only adding to the words "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" the words "for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands." So the Priest thus commissioned dares to take upon himself the Ministry of Reconciliation both in public and private.

Having seen that the Ministry of Loosing is a part of the Priest's functions, we now consider how it is

exercised. And first we note the freedom with which Christ absolves. There is no examination of conscience, no demand for satisfaction. "Son, thy sins are forgiven," are the welcome words that fall on the penitent's ear. So, also, to the poor woman who crept into the house of Simon for the peace she so greatly longed after, He says simply and shortly, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace," explaining to the Pharisee Simon that her sins were forgiven her because "she loved much." So, again, to the woman taken in the very act of sin He says, "neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." So, too, in that crowning act of absolution, that of the robber on the Cross: the moment he asked, that moment he was absolved. "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

It is of course true that our Lord recognized their repentance as real and sincere. He knew they were sorry for what they had done, and wished to amend. But how readily He meets their need, how full and free is the absolution He pronounces! It is not conditioned in any way; nothing is asked for, nothing is stipulated. The gift is theirs at once, and in its strength they are to meet the new temptations.

There is just the same teaching in our Lord's Parable of the Prodigal Son. Even while the son is yet a great way off, before he has said a word about his sorrow, the father's arms are round his neck, the father's kiss upon his cheek, and directly the confession is made, "Father, I have sinned against heaven

and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," the direction is given to the servant to bring forth the best robe and put it on him, to place the ring on his hand, the shoes on his feet; in other words, to restore him at once to his old position and his old honors.

We note, secondly, that our Lord gives it everywhere and anywhere, wherever it is needed—at the dinner table, in the crowded house, and in the Temple. It was His great joy to dispense it freely wherever and whenever asked or sought for.

We note, thirdly, that He gave it to individuals, showing plainly that He knew how much they needed it.

Now, in applying these three considerations we will take the last first. There are many who suppose that there are none who need this private, personal absolution. They say, "All ought to be content with God's forgiveness given at their own bedside or the public absolution given in the Church; this private dispensing of God's pardon is weakening to souls and ought to be discouraged." But in answer we may say that our Lord would have never sanctioned it by His own actions if it had been universally weakening, and that, so far as the need is concerned, by His remarks to Simon the Pharisee He seems to chide him for feeling it so slightly. We cannot say that all ought to have the desire for it. Every one knows that many of the best of God's children have done without it; but such an admission does not deny, what

is doubtless also a fact, that there are many men and women burdened with sins who, to use the words of Frederick Robertson, at least an unprejudiced writer, are crying, "I want guidance; I am sinful, full of evil! I want forgiveness! Absolve; tell me that I am pardoned; help me to believe it!" "a cry," he went on to say, "daily more passionate and more common." Perhaps we priests have never used the power of the keys, perhaps we are afraid of this great treasure because of "the earthen vessel" in which it is contained, and perhaps we are pressed by an unworthy prejudice that the doctrine is Roman; but whatever may be our feelings, let us take good heed that in our apparent humility we are not joining the Pharisees in their cry that "God alone can forgive sins," and denying to the Son of Man power on earth to forgive sins; let us be earnestly on the watch lest a deep-rooted distrust of a Roman method of ministering absolution should lead us to deny altogether the Gospel truth of the ministry of reconciliation; or a fear of what our people may say persuade us to be so reserved in our teaching that no soul can ever know where he may receive the benefit of absolution together with ghostly counsel and advice. Whilst we are bound to proclaim in the name of our holy Church the liberty wherewith Christ has set us free, we are also bound to proclaim it in both directions—liberty to live without any further pledge than the blessed and full assurance of God's favor given us in the Holy Eucharist, but liberty also to seek for and

obtain that personal conviction of God's loosing power which the hand and mouth of the Church seal to the penitent. The little boy who grew up to be a martyr bishop, John Coleridge Patteson, used to say that he wished to be a clergyman that he might say the absolution, for it would make people so happy. Those who have used the power of the keys committed to them know what a blessed experience this is.

We noted, in the second place, that our Lord absolved everywhere where the blessing was sought for. So the Priest needs neither Church nor Vestry nor any private place for the ministry of absolution. We have ourselves been told by one how he ministered it to a working-man on the road-side. Nor does it need any particular posture, any outward accessories. Wherever there is penitence and wherever there is the Church, there the loosing from the bands of sins may take place. We are not suggesting that any other place is so suitable as the Church, but only that time and place are not essential.

So, too, with regard to the form of absolution. That has and does and always will differ. The grace is not tied to the form any more than repentance to the particular words in which it is expressed. It is needless to say that there can be no obligation for the confession of every detail of sin. The repentance may be expressed quite shortly in the words of the Prodigal Son, or, indeed, without any words at all—in tears of contrition. The Priest needs not to know

what has been done if he can be assured, without that knowledge, of the reality of the repentance. So Jeremy Taylor, in his "Dissuasive from Popery" (book I, part ii, section xi, 2), argues at length against the Roman doctrine that it is necessary to confess in detail all our sins or even what are called mortal sins. "That of this there was no necessity, believed in the primitive Church, appears in this: because they did not expect pardon from the Bishop or Priest in the greatest crimes, but were referred wholly to God for the pardon of them." So, again, to the same effect he shows from many testimonies, gathered from mediæval as well as primitive days, that the tears of penitence sufficed in the place of the open confession of some great sin. Not that they would always. It may be that, as our Lord teaches, satisfaction ought to be made to the one offended against; the priest needs therefore to feel assured that he is not about to offer the ministry of reconciliation to one who cannot receive it. Again, the unspeakable comfort of direction cannot be given without some knowledge of the besetting sin and its manifold ramifications, and probably no penitent would be content without it. There are, then, reasons which show the usefulness of such penitential methods as are recommended by holy men of great spiritual experience. But in practice we must take good heed that their spiritual purpose is never lost sight of, which is to deepen the knowledge of sin and to establish and quicken faith in the Absolving Power

of the Living Christ. Once assured that the repentance is real, the absolution ought to be immediate, full and free.

This blessed ministry of loosing has been much abused because confounded with the Roman form of it, which is compulsory instead of free, and clogged with many conditions which make it seem hard, formal, and repulsive. We need to restore its liberty, to teach its efficacy in all the forms used, whether at Matins, Evensong, the Eucharist, or the Visitation of the Sick, to show that it has nothing necessarily to do with direction or guidance, nor with secrecy (except on the part of the Priest) or privacy; that it is not hedged about with any other condition than that of penitence, and that it is free to all to receive it in that way which they know to be most helpful to their own souls.

DEVOTIONS.

I bless and praise Thee, O Lord Jesus, for Thy great mercy in not only dying for our reconciliation, but committing the power thereof to Thy Church. Strengthen that which Thou hast wrought in us, loosing in Heaven what in Thy Name we have loosed on earth, and perfecting more and more in the fear and love of Thee the sanctification of all those whom the Good Shepherd has sought in His wanderings and laid on His shoulders and brought back rejoicing.

Grant, O Lord, to Thy faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins and serve Thee with a quiet mind.

O Lord, give me the wisdom that cometh from above, that I may judge Thy people according to right. Make me so to use the power of the keys that I may open to none to whom I ought to shut, nor shut to any to whom I ought to open. Give me a pure intention, sincere zeal, patient charity, and such diligence as shall not be in vain. Make me gentle and at the same time faithful, that I may neither despise the poor nor pay court to the rich. Help me in all my words and actions to express Thy love and justice, and so at last, with those committed to me, to attain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

VIII.

THE EAGLE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE SEER."

MEDITATION.

The Power of the Inner Life.

The life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.—*Gal. ii. 20.*

“*The life which I now live in the flesh*”—What a
(1) life it was! a life of suffering, continuous
The Priest's travel, hardship, danger, weariness, and
Life. painfulness, watching, fasting, and anxiety,
burdened also with the care of all the Churches! And yet, in spite of all that weighed upon him, St. Paul, perhaps more than any one, except St. John, possessed that “peace which passeth all understanding.” How few are my troubles compared with his, how slight my burdens, how light my affliction! Why, then, am I so often worried, as though “some strange thing had happened to me”? Remember St. Peter's words: “Even hereunto were ye called because Christ also suffered you, leaving you an example that ye should follow His steps.” That I should bear the Cross is not strange, but only that I should bear it so badly.

“*I live by the faith which is in the Son of God*”—
(2) Here is St. Paul's secret. He was quiet,
The Priest's calm, and strong in spite of outward perils,
Strength. because he was ever drawing life from the Son of God. “I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.” Through prayer and continuous

fellowship, through the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, he was ever drawing that divine life which welled forth from Christ as from a fountain. My worry and disquiet are due to the weakness of my faith, my scanty prayers, my poor communions, my infrequent meditations. I can be strong if I will, for the same source is open to me as to St. Paul.

"Who loved me, and gave Himself for me"—St. Paul's
 (3) great faith was based on our Lord's per-
 The Priest's sonal, individual, and peculiar love to him-
 Assurance. self. He knew that He loved all men, but he also knew that He loved that self of which he was so often ashamed. It was this that made him seek Christ at all times, as the wife born in low estate ever seeks the counsel and strength of the prince who has honored her with his affection. I, too, must feel this if my devotion is to be strong and persevering. There is something in me, some likeness to Christ, which draws out His divine compassion, as the child awakens a chord in the mother's heart; and that this might be perfected He died.

I will strive to make all my prayers, devotions, and
 Resolution. meditations the expression of a personal devotion to the living Christ; often meditating upon His death, the proof not only of His love for the world, but of His love for me.

VIII.

THE EAGLE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE SEER."

As we look upon the Life, the outline of which we have tried to present, we feel in despair. It seems so far beyond our powers—an Ideal, indeed, of virtue, courage, and wisdom, which we may admire, but cannot hope to reach. It were no small thing to be a Prophet, waiting in patience for the Divine Word, and then speaking it plainly and boldly; no light responsibility to live the Royal Life with its demands upon our judgment, tact, and sympathy, and no easy task to bear the burden of the Priest who daily sacrifices himself for his people: but to be, as most of us must be, Prophet, Priest, and King in one! Who is sufficient for these things, we ask?

And the sense of unfitness is only deepened by the consideration of what our ministerial life seems to be—so earthly and unspiritual. We have felt the prophet's temptations to be vain and conceited, and those of the king to be autocratic, and those that beset the Priest to be hard and proud. We have recognized at times with a shudder a certain coarseness vulgarizing all our spiritual conceptions and bringing

us down to the level of a hireling whose only thought is his wages. What is our hope, then? Surely to rise above the earthly into the heavenly sphere; to retain our ideals at all costs, or if we cannot realize the Ideal, at least "to idealize the Real." It is not sufficient that we have the understanding of a man, the royal dignity, strength, and quick activity of the lion, and the patient submission of the ox; we must have the power to soar above the earth as the eagle. The Chariot that bears the Presence of God is supported by four living creatures, and these four have the face of an eagle. The eagle life, then, must be ours. And where is that lived? The heaven is her sphere of being, the mountain top her home, the clouds her refuge. Now and again she swoops down to earth for her prey; but she stays not there, for she cannot live her life there. So, too, the Priest. He must ascend in heart and mind to that Heaven where his Master dwells and with Him continually dwell. As Dante was sustained in his awful pilgrimage through hell and purgatory by having his mind fixed on the heavenly beauty of Beatrice, so, too, the Priest-King finds his sustenance in the vision of the ascended Christ. "Apart from Me ye can do nothing."

This principle, then, that we now examine, though fourth in our arrangement, is really first in importance. Everything depends upon the Priest's inner life. "Take heed to thyself," St. Paul writes to his friend Timothy, and only when he has said that, adds

the words "and the doctrine." The late Bishop of Winchester, Anthony Thorold, was asked by a newly consecrated Bishop what, in his experience, was the one thing to be kept in mind? "All depends," he answered, "upon the personal life and character of the Bishop. That is the foundation upon which will rest all which you will be able to do." That we all feel to be true. "No man's work is or can be a failure unless he himself is a failure." The world may think it to be so, and so may we, but, provided we are earnest and spiritually-minded, the results of our work will appear, even though it be after many days. But where can we find our Model for the expression of this all-important principle? It has not been difficult to take our Lord as the Example of the Prophet, Priest, and King, for their characteristic features were outward and plainly expressed in the Gospels; but His Inner life—who may know that, or who that knows it can venture to depict it? We may well ask, and the task will not be attempted here. We may, however, venture to point out three principles of our Lord's Inner Life which at least suggest the spiritual basis of the Ministerial Life. They are these:

- (1) The Love of the Father.
- (2) The Love of the Holy Ghost.
- (3) The Love of Souls.

No attentive reader of the Gospels can fail to see how, behind all our Lord's actions, lay these great guiding motives, the first suggesting the Atmosphere

in which the Ministerial Life is lived, the second the Power by which it is sustained, and the third the Motive by which all its labors are directed.

(1) *Personal Faith in Christ or the Atmosphere of the Eagle Life.*

This with our Lord was the Love of the Father. One with the Father eternally, the love of the Father was that by which He lived. "As I live *because of the Father*," He said, "even so he that eateth Me shall live because of Me." "I speak that which I have seen with My Father." "The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father doing." And so in many passages. Of Himself He originated nothing. He spoke what He had *heard*, did what He had *seen*, judged according to His Father's mind. The one standard for men was to be perfect as His Father was perfect; the one end which He set before Himself was to glorify His Father. If the whole world left Him He would not be alone, for the Father was with Him. If only His disciples could realize the Father's love and greatness, they would rejoice instead of sorrowing at His departure, for His Father was greater—not greater in Majesty or Dignity, for the Father's desire was that all men should honor the Son as they honored Himself, but greater inasmuch as He was Father and Christ was Son. This, then, was the atmosphere in which our Lord spoke, acted, judged, and lived—the love of a Person.

So writes Dr. Liddon : " Every mystery of His Life, from His Birth in the manger to His Ascension into Heaven, was an act of Homage to the glory of the Father. Our Lord, we may say without risk of exaggeration, never conceived a thought, nor formed a desire, nor uttered a word, unless in some way word and desire and thought might set forth His Father's glory."

As we contemplate this continuous, unceasing, all-absorbing devotion of our Lord to the Father, we ask whether that is to be our atmosphere. The answer is both yes and no. In one sense " no," for our Lord always places Himself as the sustaining element in our life. "*I am the Bread of Life.*" "He that eateth me, He shall live by Me." "I am the Door." "I am the Way. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." "I am the True Vine." "Abide in Me and I in you." "Whosoever loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." And when St. Philip, seeming not to be entirely satisfied with Him as the supreme object of his life, cries, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us," our Lord is pained, and asks, "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." But in another sense " yes," for he that hath the Son hath the Father also, he that knoweth the Son knoweth the Father also. Still as there is a divine order in our knowledge of the Father, pointing the Son to us as the Way, it is quite evident that the love of

the Son is the spiritual atmosphere in which the Inner Life is to be lived. But this love brings us to the Father. Our Lord must be to us what the Father was to Him. Any attempt to substitute the love of the Father for the love of the Son would be to dishonor the Father as well as the Son. Knowing the Son we know the Father; living by the Son we live by the Father who sent Him; beholding the Son we behold the Father, Whose Image He is.

Our Lord, then, is to be the supreme object of our devotion. When He is this, then we have a proof that we have both heard the Father and learned of Him,¹ for it is the Father's will that all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, for he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him.² In the reaction that has naturally followed Calvinism the glory of the Father has emerged again from the obscurity into which harsh doctrines had driven it; and who can be thankful enough for this? But there is now a danger lest the glory of the Son should be obscured through the concentration of devotion upon the Father. From any suspicion of this His Priests at least must be free.

Let us ask ourselves, then, seriously, "What is the Person of Jesus Christ to me?" I may admire His character, feel deeply indebted to Him for His redemption, reverence Him with devotion as my God, and yet be very far from the standard set before me in the Gospels. For He is there not as a great

¹ St. John vi. 45, 46.

² St. John v. 23.

Hero of History, nor simply as a world Redeemer and Saviour, but as one who stands to me in all those relationships so beautifully expressed in St. Bernard's hymn :

" Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

" Married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead,"¹ cries St. Paul. " I am the Good Shepherd and know my sheep and am known of mine," saith the Lord. " Ye are My friends . . . I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you,"² saith the same Lord.

These relations are indeed most intimate, and they suggest not only a consideration of what He is to us, but of what we ought to be to Him. On His side there is the compassionate care of the Good Shepherd, the sympathetic interest of a true Friend, and the love of a Husband, and what is there on ours to correspond with these great realities ? Perhaps we all know something of the pain experienced when those whom *we* love are cold and indifferent and make no return beyond a passing interest in some public work in which we are engaged. Does He feel this? Does He see that whilst we are interested in the growth of His Kingdom we find no time to be

¹ Rom. vii. 4.

² St. John xv. 14, 15.

interested in Him, that whilst we are making real sacrifices to be familiar with the language or interpretation of His Word we are taking no pains to know Him ? Alas ! we all know how possible this is. But why do we know Christ so slightly ? Every one would admit that the knowledge of Christ is the most stimulating, stirring, and uplifting knowledge, but it is at the same time the most difficult—difficult because it requires infinite patience and steadfast determination of will. It has been well pointed out that the real knowledge of any person is hard enough to attain, and that the difficulty increases in proportion to the depth and greatness of his character. “We may easily idolize, or underestimate, a man, but to know him as he is—his true motives, the secret springs of his conduct, the measure of his abilities, the explanation of his inconsistencies, the nature of his esoteric feelings, the dominant principle of his inner life—this is often a work of years, and one in which our own character and conduct play quite as important a part as our understanding ; for not only must the necessary insight be the result of our own acquired capacities—which will have to be great in proportion to the greatness of the personality with which we have to deal—but there must further exist the kind and degree of affinity between us which can alone make self-revelation on his part possible. Plato, for instance, the spiritual philosopher, saw more profoundly into Socrates than could Xenophon, his companion in arms. Shakespeare and de Balzac, in their different

spheres, were unrivalled students of humanity: yet the latter could not see in it pure womanhood; the former has never painted a saint; so essentially is even the intuition of genius qualified by character."¹ We frankly recognize all this as true in our relations with men; we know that time, insight, and moral affinity are necessary elements in that knowledge which leads to human friendship. How, then, can we expect to know Christ without them? Nay, inasmuch as holiness is the dominant feature in His Character, must we not add another element? "To know a Person who is perfectly holy we must focus our entire moral character upon Him"; and such an effort of the will naturally leads to repentance. "Penitence of heart or contrition would seem a necessary element in the purification of those who would know God," and therefore of those who would know Christ, and without it "we must part, or remain on a lower level of intercourse; we cannot grow in intimacy and the insight which intimacy brings."

We now see why it is that, in spite of the tremendous claims that our Lord, by His creation of us in His own Image, His Incarnation and Death, has upon our devotion, so many are servants rather than friends. To know Christ takes time, will, purification, prayer, and penitence, and the life we live is too fast to encourage such things. We are told that "we must specialize our study with that view"; but who has time to specialize? So *we* feel. Let us

¹ Illingworth's Bampton Lectures, p. 117.

look to the life of a very busy man of God, who learned to know Christ well, and see how he did. No human being has ever probably done as much for the world in thirty years as St. Paul did. To have covered Asia Minor with churches would have been a great achievement, but when we add to that his work in Europe and his fourteen letters showing so plainly what his care of all the Churches involved, we wonder where *he* found the time. And yet this busy and hard-working man regarded everything as of small importance compared with the personal knowledge of Christ. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ . . . and do count them but dung that I may . . . know Christ."¹ Christ was his life, and in proportion as he knew Him he found it. To live without Him was like living without air; it meant death. Hence this was the first necessity not simply of his work, but of his spiritual existence. And how did he learn to know Him? Not chiefly by books, of which he had probably very few; not chiefly by friends. No, it was rather by specializing all his studies, all his work, with that end in view. Through Nature, through men and women, through the Old Testament, through Prayer, through the Life-giving Food, Christ was ever revealing Himself. He saw His hand in every movement of his life, His will in every circumstance, His face in every beautiful object. And so at last, after many years, when quite an old man, he could

¹ Phil. iii. 8.

say with full sincerity, "I know whom I have believed,"¹ and could look forward to a yet fuller knowledge. "I shall know fully, even as also I have known."² Our knowledge will come in the same way. As we have learnt to know literature, language, science by a succession of sacrifices; as we have learnt to know our friend or, it may be, our wife by giving up this or that, so we learn to know Christ. The giving up of time in prayer, the yielding our will in some sacrifice, the humiliation of our pride in some act of penitence, the surrender of our best in answer to some call, the spending our money in some devotion to the poor, and of our life in Eucharistic worship—all these lead to unveilings, and each unveiling to fresh knowledge, till at last we find all our life, whether as Prophet, Priest, or King, irradiated by the glory which streams from the Sun of Righteousness now rising above our horizon.

(2) *The Unction of the Holy Ghost or the Power by which the Eagle Life is Sustained.*

We pass from the consideration of the atmosphere in which the eagle life is lived to that of the power which sustains it. Now, as we think of *His* Life in this respect, we are beset by difficulties, especially if we attempt any analysis of that which lies within "the awful sanctuary of the Inner Life of His Human Soul." But this is not necessary. We

¹ 2 Tim. i. 12.

² 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

shall speak without explanation of certain phenomena noted in the Gospel accounts of His Life which suggest a certain intimate relation between the Holy Ghost and the Inner Life of our Lord.

At the beginning of His Ministry we are told that "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him";¹ and, further, that the same Holy Ghost immediately afterwards "driveth Him into the wilderness";² and yet, again, that He "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee."³ So, in accord with the teaching of these passages, we find our Lord, in His first public sermon, not only choosing a text which speaks of the Unction of the Holy Ghost, but one which also indicates its object. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."⁴ It was in the Spirit "given without measure" that He spoke the words of God.⁵ But, further, not only His teaching, but His miracles also, if we are to accept the interpretation which the context with its teaching on "Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost" naturally gives to the phrase "the Finger of God."⁶ But yet, again, not only His miracles, but the Great Sacrifice,

¹ St. Luke iii. 22.

³ St. Luke iv. 14.

⁵ St. John iii. 34.

² St. Mark i. 12.

⁴ St. Luke iv. 18.

⁶ St. Luke xi. 20.

for it was "by means of the Eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God."¹ So, too, the Spirit raised up the Jesus that died and was buried,² and "by the Holy Spirit" He gave commandment to the Apostles during the great Forty Days.³ And when, in the Revelation, the glorified Jesus as the slain One risen again and ascended, speaks to the Seven Churches, the voices of the Saviour and of the Spirit are as one.⁴ Knowing so little of the eternal relations of the Blessed Persons of the Holy Trinity, we cannot explain the meaning of these wonderful passages, but they are sufficient to justify the thought that in some way the Eternal Son of God did the will of His Father in the power of the Holy Ghost.

And if this be true of Him who was coequal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, what shall we say of His creatures? What but this? That they cannot remain for a second in the heavenly atmosphere of the life of Christ without the supporting power of the Holy Ghost. So our Lord teaches, bidding the disciples look to the Holy Ghost for the supply of every need. It is the Holy Ghost Who would enable them to receive the life-giving draughts of the cool, fresh, invigorating strength of God, for He would take the things of Jesus Christ and show them unto them.⁵

¹ Heb. ix. 14.

² Rom. viii. 11.

³ Acts i. 2.

⁴ Rev. ii. 1-7.

⁵ St. John xvi. 15.

It is the Holy Ghost Who would lift them out of earth's false mists into the clear blue of God's Truth, for He is the Spirit of Truth and would guide them into all Truth, bringing all things to their remembrance which the Truth had spoken.¹

It is the Holy Ghost Who would guide them out of the darkness of unbelief into the clear bright light of the Sun of Righteousness, for His work was to glorify Christ.²

It is the Holy Ghost Who, when the eagle's wings flag and droop in prayer, would give them a strange vitality and quickness, at once enabling them to reach the Presence of God.³ And these promises are for us. Here lies what Liddon has called "the Secret of Clerical Power." We ask now how we may realize them, how we may make this secret our own?

(1) *Pray for it.* "They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." When St. John in the spirit saw the Lamb upon the Throne, he also saw before it seven lamps of fire burning, "which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." As a devout writer says, "It is only by waiting before that throne of grace that we become imbued with the holy fire; but he who waits there long and believingly, will imbibe that fire and come forth from his communion with God-bearing tokens of where he has been. For the individual believer and, above all, for every laborer in the Lord's vineyard, the only way to gain spiritual power is by

¹ St. John xvi. 13. ² St. John xvi. 14. ³ Rom. viii. 26.

secret waiting at the Throne of God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. . . . We said before that this fire cannot be simulated ; nothing else will produce its effects. No more can the means of obtaining it be feigned. Nothing but the Lord's own appointed, means nothing but ' waiting at the Throne ' ; nothing but keeping the heart under ' the eyes of the Lamb,' to be again and again penetrated by His spirit, can put the soul into that condition in which it is a meet instrument to impart the light and power of God to other men." ¹

(2) *Believe in it.* We repeat again and again the words " I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life," but repetition is not faith. Faith in the Holy Ghost means making ventures in the confidence that " He will give you a mouth and wisdom which all of your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist " ; ² ventures in preaching in the open air without manuscript or note ; ventures in praying by the beds of the sick or by the side of our friends in the simple, unstudied language of our hearts ; ventures in rebuking the open sinner or the profane crowd that stands jeering at those on their way to worship ; ventures in helping, as St. Philip did, the wealthy and influential out of darkness into light.

(3) *Avoid everything that is not only impure, but coarse and low.* The spirit of purity shuns the impure. The vulgar jest, the remark that men speak

¹ Arthur, " Tongue of Fire," p. 311. ² St. Luke xxi. 15.

of as being "bad form," the doubtful innuendo—these things so slight and unimportant in themselves—spoil that disposition which is the ready instrument of the Holy Ghost. Never perhaps till this century were vulgar and low methods used for the proclamation of the Gospel, and no partial success can ever atone for the want of that "godly fear" which is always a mark of the "wisdom that cometh down from above." The most brutal and godless were touched by a Wesley or Whitfield, who, in all their passionate zeal for God's service, never yielded to the temptation to gain a cheap applause by a flash of worldly wit or a coarse jest.

(4) *Be patient.* We have to learn, as Elijah learned, that the way of the Spirit is not the way of compulsion. It is not by the miraculous fire from heaven, not by the slaughter of four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, not by the great excitement of the momentary conversion of a whole people, not by such compelling force as would persuade men to cry out in the fever of a hot and crowded meeting, "the Lord He is God, the Lord He is God," but by the "still small voice" the Holy Spirit loves to work. It may be our lot to experience a similar disappointment to that of Elijah, and to have as our work not the conversion of a parish, but only the preparation of one who will do it after we are gone. "Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room."

(3) *The Love of Souls or the Motive by which the Eagle Life is Directed.*

We have spoken of the atmosphere in which the eagle's life is lived, of its power of movement, and now we speak of its motive. And looking at once to the Great Example, it is not difficult to determine where He found it. His own words to His disciples—"I have meat to eat that ye know not of." "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work"¹—sufficiently explain it. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. And as we have already seen, it was not merely crowds, peoples, nations, a world, that He felt such a care for, but individuals—single, solitary souls like the poor woman who crept into the crowd to get her blessing and depart secretly, the out-cast Zacchæus, the penitent Mary Magdalene, giving them time which a kingdom would now think itself fortunate in possessing.

What was the secret of this love of souls? There must be something in each soul that excites this wonderful compassion and strong, deep love—a love so great that Dr. Pusey tells us that it has been supposed that He would be crucified again if so He could save one single soul the more.

There were, we may say, three elements in that strong love of the Son of God, which nothing wears out. First, the Benevolent Compassion of the Powerful

¹ St. John iv. 32-34.

for the weak, of the good for the wretched, that which was shadowed forth in the daring deed of the man who plunged last winter into the ice of the Hudson to save the poor suicide. We are His creatures, and, as such, are the objects of His mercy. "As a father pitieth his own children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him."¹

Secondly, there was human sympathy with our need. "In all points tempted like as we are." He knows our difficulties and trials, our sorrows and afflictions, and from having felt them is anxious to relieve them. When the brave Welsh miners some years ago saw from the shore a ship in sore distress and imminent peril, with men clinging to the rigging, their own knowledge of danger at once stimulated them to a rescue which others were not willing to attempt, and when asked what reward they desired, they answered briefly, "We have the lives of the men." So He who inspired this and every courageous action sought us out because He saw our misery. "In all our affliction He was afflicted," and our very necessities drove Him to the Cross, whilst our salvation is His supreme satisfaction.

In the third place, there is a close connecting link or tie between each man and Christ. He is "the Head of every man," and in Him every man finds the perfect image of Himself. That strange variety of characters, separated by race, color, nationality, by tribe, clan, and family, perpetuated in so marvellous

¹ Ps. ciii. 13.

a manner that no type is, so far as we know, repeated—no man has his own perfect double—this is found in Christ. "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus,"¹ writes the Apostle. And this because each man finds himself in Christ, and, therefore, in Him finds a perfect relationship to every one else. That love which drove the sculptor to give his life for his statue is a shadow of that greatest Love which constrained Christ to give His life for those who were images of Himself. Between Him and each soul, then, there is a secret tie of intimacy, closer than that which exists between parent and child. If the soul recognizes this and "*overcomes*" every hindrance to its realization, then one day, in the "new name which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it,"² will be revealed the great secret of the attachment of Christ to the individual, shadows of which are seen in the love of poets for their poems, of artists for their paintings, and, still more, of parents for their children. "Then we shall know even as we are known."

It is this infinite variety in human life, together with the peculiar interest which every member of the human race possesses for our Lord, that made our Lord's work such a joy to Him. The finding of a lost soul was with Him, to use His own images, like that of the shepherd finding the sheep whose name he knew and whose peculiarities he cared for; or that of the woman finding the coin which not only had a beauty of its own and a place of its own in the cir-

¹ Gal. iii. 28.

² Rev. ii. 17.

clet for her head, but, as part of an old family heirloom, was bound up with family traditions ; or yet, again, like that of the father meeting again, after a long separation, his boy, whose repentance and return home he had yearned after.

So the words of Keble are not overstrained, expressing indeed that which is short of rather than that which is in excess of the truth :

“ Thou art as much His care, as if beside
Nor man nor angel lived in heaven or earth ;
Thus sunbeams pour alike their glorious tide
To light up worlds or wake an insect's mirth ;
They shine and shine with unexhausted store.
Thou art Thy Saviour's darling ; seek no more.”

Of course there is much more in our Lord's love for souls than we have ventured to suggest. There is that love which naturally springs out of His Death for them. That for which we hazard our lives is much more precious to us than that which required no such venture. But we have quite enough for serious thought. This was His constraining motive, His joy, and one source of His strange influence amongst men. “The central power of Christ's ministry,” writes Bishop Brooks, “is the intense value which the Saviour always sets upon the souls for which He lived and died. It shines in everything He says and does. It looks out from His eyes when they are happiest and saddest. It trembles in the most loving consolations and thunders in the most passionate

rebukes which come from His lips. It is the inspiration at once of His pity and His indignation." And he rightly adds, "That power still continues wherever the same value of the soul is present. If we could see how precious the human soul is as Christ saw it, our ministry would approach the effectiveness of Christ's." At least this must be our endeavor, at least we must try to correct old impressions, to remove class prejudices, to judge not after "man's judgment," but as He would judge if He were in our place.

The chief interest of our parish, then, will not consist in its fine church, its well-trained choir, or its valuable historic associations; it will not be found in the fact that there are a large number of wealthy and intelligent people living in it; but in this, that there are souls whom Christ loves and desires to save. The fact that He loves each one, no matter what his circumstances may be, shows that he is precious. It is our duty, then, to try and discover the value that perhaps lies hidden away.

"Have printed in your remembrance" is the serious appeal of the Church—"have printed in your remembrance"—how *great a treasure* is "committed to your charge." It is something we are apt to forget or be careless about; something, then, which needs to be ever before our mind like the written words of a text which we hang upon our walls.

This, then, is our first thought—that if we look upon our parish with Christ's eyes, it must be inter-

esting. It may be hard and difficult to work, just as in some mines, the ore lying deep, shafts must be sunk far below the surface. There may be dangers of flooding or explosion, but being valuable, it is necessarily interesting.

In the second place, not only is the mine, as a whole, interesting, but also each piece of ore that comes to the surface. Who knows but that the stone flung carelessly away may not conceal some great treasure ! So each soul the Priest comes into contact with has a separate interest of its own. It may be that one alone will reward him for all the work and pains he has bestowed upon the whole parish. The education of but one Prince has sometimes been thought to be an occupation deserving not only a man's whole time for many years, but the highest ability that can be found. Think of his future, men say ; what responsibilities lie before him. And yet what is his earthly future compared with that of one whose destiny it is to judge angels ?

In the third place, the Priest must be prepared to sacrifice himself in order to find the treasure. The Church, our Lord tells us, is like a merchantman seeking goodly pearls who, when he had found one of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. So, too, the Priest, on finding in some soul the pearl of great price, gives up everything for the time in order to secure it. Time in conversation and letters, money advantageously bestowed in pictures and books, prayers without number—all that

he has—he freely bestows to gain that one. And not only this, but for a time he neglects “the ninety and nine.” He cannot do two things at once, so during the days he spends in this search he leaves his work of edification, placing it in the hands of others till he can return with the all-absorbing task completed.

Lastly, for every return he makes special thanksgiving, inviting the fellowship of the Church. They, too, must be interested in this most happy recovery; they, too, must be prepared to give a welcome to one who will need all the strength they can give him to stand firm and strong. It is not only his work but theirs, not only his joy but theirs.

Yes, here lies our success, and therefore here lies our best inspiration. For, as Canon Liddon says, “Mankind are open to such world-embracing love! It is a force the might of which they involuntarily recognize; it is as powerful in one age as another, in one society or civilization as another; it is always needful, as it is always welcome, to the mental and bodily sufferings of mankind; it gives the man who brings it influence with souls which he may and must turn to his Master’s glory; it gives him this influence in the largest measure at the time when he most earnestly declines it.”¹

¹ “Clerical Life,” p. 108.

DEVOTIONS.

(From "*Meditations on the Life of Christ*," by Thomas à Kempis.)

I bless and thank Thee, O Lord Jesu Christ, for the spotless sanctity of Thy Life, which for a long period Thou leddest privately with Thy parents in Nazareth. From Thy twelfth to Thy thirtieth year, in great poverty, humility, and obedience, didst Thou abide with them. . . . O, the humility of Christ ! How dost Thou confound the pride of my vanity, and with what a bright example dost Thou admonish me to shun all vain show, to avoid the crowds of the outside world, to choose a life of obscurity ; desiring to be known of God alone, taking heed above all things to my own salvation ! Suffer me not to thrust myself rashly before men for the sake of edification ; may I rather, with diligent endeavor, study the Word of Life until the voice from heaven shall call, " Bring forth fruit."

(From Arvisenet's "*Memoriale Vitæ Sacerdotalis*.")

O Jesu, good Shepherd, who wert seen on earth and didst dwell among men, grant that, by ever studying Thy commandments, I may be filled with Thy most sacred doctrine.

Grant that, ever mindful of Thy blessings, I may more and more burn with Thy love. Grant that, continually

meditating upon Thy perfection, I may day by day be more conformed to Thee.

O my soul, praise Jesus everywhere; love Jesus everywhere; worship Jesus everywhere; offer thyself to Jesus everywhere; sigh without ceasing for Jesus, until thou dost expire in Jesus, and reignest forever with Him.

Hymns : 303 A. & M.; 445 American Hymnal.

When morning gilds the skies,

178 A. & M.; 434 American Hymnal.

Jesu, the very thought of Thee.

IX.

THE EAGLE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE
SEER."

MEDITATION.

For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth,—*St. John xvii. 19.*

What does this mean? Sanctification signifies separation. So the holy vessels were sanctified as being separated from all common use. So the Nazarites were sanctified, being separated in certain particulars from other men. In what ways did our Lord separate Himself? Firstly, He separated Himself intellectually, concentrating His Mind on but one Book—the Holy Scriptures. Secondly, He brought all the natural inclinations of His Perfect Human Nature towards statesmanship, art, or poetry under the one Sovereign Purpose of His Life—the Redemption of the world. Thirdly, He who needed not to fast nor to give alms did both for their sakes whom He served with the most devoted love to the end. Fourthly, He who was and is the Life willingly “straitened” Himself and chose the narrow path of death in preference to the abundance of life to which He was invited.

“*For their sakes*”—These twelve men whom he had chosen were the unceasing object of His prayers and every act of consecration. The life which to the world seemed so narrow and limited, He directed with a view to their sanctification. The wider life outside, which he did not directly touch,

He would touch through His Apostles, for from Him they would catch that spirit of real consecration which would make them a power in the world and lead others to sanctification.

Like our High Priest, we, too, must sanctify ourselves
 (3) for the sake of our people. Habits of
 Our Sanctifi- life that are not necessary for others are
 cation. needful for us, because only by them will
 our parishioners learn certain great truths. "As with the priest so with the people." If our public prayers are scanty, theirs will be. If our charity is mean, so will theirs be. If we neither make nor keep a fixed rule for the Friday and Lenten Fasts, they will disregard fasting altogether. If we make no daily study of the Bible, if other books are evidently more to us than God's Book, then they will neglect Scripture study. The world will regard a consecrated life as narrow and limited, but "for the sake" of those we serve we must bear the reproach.

Contemplating Thy life of sanctification, of willing
 Resolution. submission to restraints which Thou
 didst not need, I desire to bring my life
 under a fixed rule of Scripture study and meditation, of fasting and almsgiving. Grant me, O Lord, Thy help so to do, having but one motive, Thy glory and the good of my flock.

IX.

THE EAGLE OR THE MINISTRY OF "THE SEER."

We have spoken of three great characteristics in the Inner life of our Lord and Master. We shall now consider how they may be reproduced in ourselves.

The love of Jesus, which corresponds with us to His Love of the Father, can only be experienced by those who know Jesus. This knowledge is spiritual rather than intellectual, and yet it depends on the efforts the mind makes to understand the Revelation of Jesus given us in the Holy Scriptures. Bible knowledge is, then, essential to the life of the Priest.

The love of the Holy Ghost is maintained and deepened by unceasing prayer. Prayer, then, is another means for the reproduction of the inner life of Jesus.

The love of souls—that affection all-important to the work of the Priest—if it is to be kept living, warm, and true, must be nourished by a life of continuous self-sacrifice. We must, therefore, know something of what is intended by self-consecration.

(1) Knowledge of the Scriptures.

This knowledge is placed by the Church in the very forefront of the Priest's intellectual life. When he was ordained to the Diaconate, the only gift made over to him was the New Testament, and when to the Priesthood the Holy Bible; the Church showing him by a touching and expressive symbolism that she expects him to be at least "the man of one book," knowing the *Scriptures* even if he knows nothing of anything else. But she is not satisfied with this. Before delivering him her Great Treasure, she exacts a pledge of hearty and diligent reverence. "Will you be diligent in reading of the Holy Scriptures and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?" She requires of him not only diligence, *i. e.*, assiduous application and persevering effort, but self-denial. Not only is there something to be embraced, but something also to be given up. The "study of the world and the flesh" is to be laid aside in order that the whole attention may be concentrated on the Holy Scriptures. There is nothing narrow and limited in this exaction of the Church, for the Holy Scriptures are not prescribed as containing the only books the priest is to look at. She knows quite well that the comprehension of the Sacred Word depends on the comprehension of other things, such as man in himself, man also as seen in history. The Bible is as perfectly human as it is

perfectly Divine, the outward is as real as the inward, and therefore the knowledge of language, history, geography, human thought, and science is of high importance. All these are the studies that "help to the knowledge of the same." The Church, then, has not so much in mind any particular books or studies which are to be laid aside as a particular point of view. All our reading is to have but one aim and end, and that the better comprehension of the Divine Revelation as given in the Holy Scriptures; all reading that is without this definite regard is to be given up.

There is nothing unreasonable, we repeat, in this pledge we are asked to give. The Bible stands to literature as Christ to mankind. It sums it all up and explains its aspirations and desires. In making it the centre of our studies we are not growing narrower, but broader. Philosophy, history, geography, poetry, fiction, and even science have a loftier meaning attached to them, and at once become alive with a fresh interest.

It is not with this end in view, however, that we make the Bible the centre of our intellectual work; we study the Bible in order to know our Lord. He is the Light of all Scripture. The Law, Psalms, and Prophets bear witness of Him, as well as the Gospels and Epistles. To omit the knowledge of but one book of the Bible is to shut ourselves off from one aspect of Christ's character, and perhaps that which it most concerns us to know.

Enough has now been said to show the importance of Bible study and the place which it occupies in the mind of the Church. And yet even in these days of "Companions" and "Aids" to the Bible, of Commentaries and Expositions, how comparatively little is the Bible studied by the clergy after their Ordination! How many have read through the Prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the Song of Songs, or the Book of Ecclesiastes? We are afraid to confess our ignorance of some modern work of fiction, and yet hear without shame some chapter or verse of God's Word quoted which is quite strange to us.

Now let us look at His Example, and seeing His zeal for the Inspired Record, catch something of that which made it burn so brightly. And first His study of the Original Language of the Old Testament. We shall not enter here upon the question of our Lord's knowledge beyond the assumption of what is generally admitted—namely, that granted that He knew all things as God at the same time as He knew only some things as man, He did really learn letters just as we have to learn them. The translation of Omniscience into human forms and expressions of knowledge He acquired, and, it would seem, by degrees. Aramaic was, we may venture to say, His mother tongue. Hebrew and Greek He learned, if, as seems probable, He knew them. That He was acquainted with Hebrew seems a natural inference from His own expressions (see St. Matthew v. 18)

and from His reading the Scriptures in the synagogue of Nazareth ; for it is probable that the synagogue roll of Nazareth, from which He was invited to read on His return from Judæa, was in Hebrew, the reader having first to read it in that language, and then to translate it into the language of the people.^{*} It is not so clearly made out that He learned Greek ; but as the Greek Version of the Scriptures was extensively circulated in Palestine and as the New Testament writers very frequently quote from it, it is at least not improbable that He was as familiar with this as with Hebrew. When we consider the narrow limitations of His earthly home, crowded as it was with Joseph's children, the claims that His profession as a carpenter made upon Him, the difficulty in Nazareth of procuring books or teachers, we feel that this learning must have been attended with so many hardships that no one but He could have overcome them. But as His zeal for the House of the Lord led Him to make that public manifestation of His personal Authority which He was always seeking to avoid, so His zeal for the Scriptures led Him to give up precious hours, snatched from sleep or recreation, to the study of those languages through which it had been given to men.

If *He* did this who needed not to do it, can we, who need it so much, do less ? It may be said that the sacrifice involved in learning Hebrew does not bring such results as make it worth our while, that

^{*} Stalker, " *Imago Christi*," p. 149.

we can find all that is necessary from those who have attained a knowledge that we can never hope to have, that others have become helpful teachers without it. All this may be true enough ; but one question still remains unanswered : What personal sacrifice have we made for the Word of God ? What have we lost in order to find its hidden treasures ? Have we not learned Latin, French, or German with much less worthy an object in view ? Perhaps our little love for the Bible may be due to the very little it has cost us. "Where our treasure is there our heart will be also." But if the language of the Old Testament must by some be put aside, the same cannot be said of that of the New. This, in a measure, all have learned before their Ordination ; it remains, then, that they increase the measure, that they study their Greek Testament daily, that they become so familiar with it as to find it a real companion. Divinely prepared as the Greek language was to become the chosen vehicle of God's thoughts, divinely selected as the particular forms employed in the New Testament are to express God's mind as nearly as is possible in human language, it behoves all those who are able, to give the outward form that reverence which it certainly deserves. As a holy devotion was shown to the Body of the Lord to make some reparation for its shocking ill-treatment at the hands of men—a devotion evidently commended by God—so a similar devotion ought to be given to that outward form of Holy Scripture which is the shrine of the mind of God.

But our Blessed Lord was not content with a knowledge of the sacred language. He also took pains to store His Holy Mind with the very words of Scripture. We may say at once that He knew the whole of the Old Testament by heart. The Psalms, the Prophets, the Law, were alike at command when asked for. Alone in the wilderness, or in public surrounded by enemies, enjoying a quiet hour with His disciples, or suffering the agonies of death upon the Cross, it is the Scripture to which He ever turns naturally and easily, as we might turn to the familiar words of the Lord's Prayer. He cared to remember but one Book, and that was the "Word of God."

The faculty of memory is a very precious gift. That we should be able to store up within our minds the sayings of others and bring them out in all their freshness perhaps years after we first heard them is indeed remarkable. We feel it a reproach that we use it so little, and that the use we have made has been so inadequate. Some take pains to remember such jests and good stories as may awaken mirth in others, others such wise sayings as may give them some credit when they pass them on, others the language of poets and dramatists wherewith to stimulate their minds and those of their friends; but how few take pains to know the very words of the only Book which, so far as we can tell, He knew! How few even learn by heart the words of the Incarnate God! And yet we should strive to attain this not only out of reverence for the Word of God, not merely because

in so doing we are following in His steps, but because without it our ministry is hampered. Mr. Spurgeon is quite right in saying "that people like to have the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture. The many are not always sufficiently capable of grasping the sense apart from the language, of gazing, so to speak, upon the truth disembodied, but when they hear the precise words reiterated again and again, they are more edified, and the truth forces itself more firmly upon their memories." We remember hearing of a great preacher in Australia whom hundreds flocked to listen to chiefly on account of his apt and frequent quotations from Scripture. One verse every night before retiring would soon make us rich in the literal knowledge of the "Word of God." But it is not more necessary for our public than for our private ministrations. The "Word of God" is as much alive to-day as it ever was, and sharper than any two-edged sword. No rebuke goes deeper than one couched in its words. The reproach "Have ye never read out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" went home to the hearts of those who would have Him still the children's cries, as the words "Have ye not read that which was spoken to you by God saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" went home to the consciences of the Sadducean sceptics.

Now, for this use it is imperative that we should have not only a large amount of Scripture at com-

mand, but also a profound conviction of its divine authoritativeness. It is to this we now turn. The authority of Scripture was paramount with our Lord. Not one jot or one tittle should ever pass away without fulfilment. Heaven and earth might pass away, but the "Word of God" abideth forever. So believing, our Lord used it freely. The "Word of God" divided with Himself the supreme seat of Authority. At times He would say, "But I say unto you"; at other times, "What saith the Scripture?" or "Have ye not read?" or, briefly, "It is written." That decided the question. There was no further appeal. When He takes in hand a sweeping reform like that of cleansing the Temple, He justifies it with this brief statement: "It is written, My House is the House of Prayer"; when questioned about divorce, He asks, "Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female? and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they twain shall be one flesh."

And having this feeling of reverence for it, He is indignant with those who presume to tamper with it. There was no further proof needed of the separation of many from God than the fact that they made the "Word of God" of no effect through their tradition, substituting their doctrine of Corban for the teaching of the fifth commandment (St. Mark vii. 6, 10-13). But perhaps no better example of His devotion to the Word could be shown than that which St. John

gives us in his record of the Passion.¹ We see Him contemplating the divinely drawn pictures of Scripture in His last moments. Seeing one that yet remained to be fulfilled, that which depicted the dying Messiah craving and yet in vain for some draught of refreshing water to cool His fevered tongue, He cried, "I thirst," that this last insult might be paid Him, that the old words, "They gave Me gall to eat, and when I was thirsty they gave Me vinegar to drink,"² might be fulfilled.

Here, too, we need to learn a lesson. Whilst none will regret the very healthy reaction which has taken place against that unreal quotation of Scripture common in days gone by when texts apart from contexts were the staple of religious conversation, yet all disciples of the Word must regret that not only is the authority of Scripture weakened, but that many fear to use it at all except in the House of God. There is a general and widespread shyness respecting the Bible. In spite of its world-wide fame and the increasing attention given by the few to it, men shrink from using it as an authority in morals or doctrine. They prefer to rest their case on the reasonableness of the question at issue; they are indisposed to assert shortly, "It is written," or "The Bible says so and so." It may be said in defence that such a statement would carry no weight, and it is true that at the time it is likely that with some it would carry but slight conviction; but, in any case, whether its use be ulti-

¹ St. John x. 35.

² St. John xix. 28, and Ps. lxix. 21.

mately successful or not, we are bound to make the appeal, we are bound to let men know that there is a Divine Authority upon the earth by which all things are tried and measured, and that their happiness consists in their submission to it. With one solemn reflection we close. It is plainly implied in our Lord's teaching that the Bible will not only be the judge, but the accuser of those who have neglected its teaching. "Think not," He said to the Jews, "that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust."¹ If that were the case with the Law, what must it be with the whole Bible? Now, no people have put such trust in the Bible as those of the Anglo-Saxon race. Are we, the leaders, prepared to defend ourselves against its accusations, its definite charge that whilst we have claimed to be a Bible-loving people we have shown but scant obedience to its commands and teachings?

(2) *Prayer.*

To know Christ we must know the Scriptures, which testify of Him. But this knowledge, if it is to become a part of ourselves, must be saturated in the atmosphere of Prayer. It is this that marks the difference between the study of the Bible and Meditation. The former is mainly intellectual, the latter primarily spiritual. The former is the exercise of our mind upon the Truths of Revelation in order

¹ St. John v. 45.

that we may see their relation to one another and to that perfect whole of which they are a part. Meditation, on the other hand, is the exercise of our spirit on the same Truths that we may see them in relation to ourselves. And as we may be said never to know a thing truly until we have seen it in relation to self, it may be true to add that we never know anything until we have made it our own by Meditation.

Meditation, then, is not an exercise only necessary for the few who set before themselves a high standard, but for all who, without it, are in the paradoxical position characterized by our Lord as "seeing and yet not perceiving, hearing and not understanding." As Canon Liddon has said, "Meditation is a duty with which every person who is attempting to lead a religious life is supposed to be familiar."¹ If, then, it be incumbent on all to meditate, how much more upon those whose work is not only to stimulate, but to guide the meditations of others! To quote the same writer again, "It lies at the root of the priestly life and is of primary importance." And if we are to make any progress with it, it must be made daily. We cannot put it off on the days we write our sermons and addresses, nor postpone it when we find ourselves encumbered with business, without finding our next attempt more difficult than the previous one. It may occasion surprise that it is spoken of here rather than in connection with

¹ "Clerical Life and Work," p. 22.

the study of Scripture. It is true that Scripture is the main subject of Meditation, but prayer is its working power. We could make profitable meditations without Scripture, on the Articles of the Creed, the Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, but there could be no meditation without prayer. It is by prayer we take the first step and place ourselves in the Presence of God; by prayer we set the wings of the imagination in flight, soaring with our thought to some height where it will catch the light of God; by prayer we concentrate our attention on that which is now illuminated, seizing that one lesson which seems to be most prominent; by prayer we stimulate the emotions of love, grief, or hate; and, lastly, by prayer we gird up the powers of the will to make one brief resolution.

Prayer, then, is the very life of meditation.

But not only this. Prayer is, as we have already noticed, the means whereby we abide in the power of the Anointing of the Holy Ghost. It was whilst He was *praying* that "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him."¹ The power of Unction; that strange, mysterious power which gives to simple words such a magnetic force, which compels attention, restrains frivolity, and so often mightily persuades; that power the absence of which nothing can really compensate for, the presence of which all enjoy; that power which is as often found in slow, quiet tones as in urgent, passionate

¹ St. Luke iii. 22.

declamation, in the Bible Class as in the crowded Cathedral—whence comes it? From the Holy Ghost, the Giver of Life. How comes it? In answer to prayer. The man of prayer is, without exception, the man of unction. It is Prayer, then, that gives life to our preaching and teaching and power to all our words.

But, further, Prayer sustains the weight of our liturgical and congregational worship. The Offices, as we are apt to call them somewhat lightly—even that tremendous office, the Holy Communion, by which some have been moved to tears—may be, and often are, it is to be feared, very burdensome. The priest that rushes from careless chatter or hot argument into the Sanctuary of God needs something more than the brief moment in the Vestry if he is to take up the words of the solemn Confession, the prayers and psalms of Saints of God, without hypocrisy. “For the efficient discharge of this one duty,” writes Dr. Liddon of the daily recitation of Matins and Evensong, “a devotional and collected temper is required. . . . The case of a man who should ignore or neglect the formation of such a temper and yet attempt to obey the Church’s rule would be lamentable but certain. He would, first of all, be distressed by the contrast between his own inward life, its aims, tone, and atmosphere, and that of the formularies, from periodical contact with which his sense of duty would not allow him to escape. Gradually this sense of contrast would weaken and die,

and the service would be said more and more mechanically. At length a crisis would arrive, however originating; nature would revolt at a degrading and hypocritical mechanism claiming to represent the soul's aspirations towards its Maker; and the practice would be abandoned, without a suspicion that it might have become the stimulus and centre of vital religion."¹

All this is equally true of the Sunday services. The public devotions of the Church are not less burdensome if only occasionally used. It is true that the presence of a congregation compels a certain outward decency and appearance of reverence, but it cannot give that undefinable something which makes men feel that their Priest is praying, nor can it remove that outward affectation and vanity which at times appear to enjoy the majestic solemnity of the Prayer Book, as though it gave a unique opportunity for fine phrasing. No, if we are to escape from the horrible temptation to use the service for our own advantage, from the only less horrible formality which prays without knowing what it prays for, from the coldness which chills a congregation into idle listlessness, we must be men of prayer. In the multiplication of services there has been a disposition to find the time for them out of that which our less "*dévôte*" forefathers gave to their private prayers and Bible reading. The early celebration, followed by breakfast and that again by Matins, leaves but lit-

¹ "Clerical Life and Work," p. 22.

tle time for quiet devotion. And yet the increase of Church offices demands the lengthening rather than the shortening of those hours when we can go aside and be still with God. If we could but establish a rule which provided that our hours of private devotion should at least correspond with our hours of public devotion, how great a change would ensue! And if this be thought too exacting, it is not too much to ask that all our services should be followed, as well as prefaced, by the spirit of prayer; *i. e.*, by as quiet and serious a pause as opportunity will allow. But we have now said enough as to the importance of prayer—a habit so essential to the Priest that if he is without it, and not minded to get it, he had better seek any other profession than that which demands it as its first and last qualification.

Persuaded as to its necessity, deploring our poverty in it, we turn to Him, our Example, for guidance, with those old words, “Lord, teach us how to pray.” And as we contemplate that picture of Him which the Gospels give us, we feel that His life was a life of Prayer.¹ The words “Father, I thank Thee that Thou heardest Me, and I knew that Thou hearest Me always”² imply a constant habit of prayer. It is difficult for us to understand why He Who was Perfect God as well as Perfect Man should pray, and appar-

¹ Cf. Mason, “The Conditions of our Lord’s Life on Earth,” p. 75.

² St. John xi. 41, 42.

ently, as in the Garden of Gethsemane, for Himself as well as for others; but we cannot and must not ignore the fact because of the mystery in which it is enwrapped, but rather express our gratitude that in that part of our life which is hardest He has given us an example that we should follow His steps.

And first we notice the spirit of our Lord's Prayers, their intense reality. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that He offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, and that He was heard because of His godly reverence.¹ He is probably referring to the prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane, which forced the precious Blood from our Lord's veins. This energy and intensity of feeling made His prayers different from those of all others, and so impressed the disciples that they wished to pray like Him. "As He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray."² But with all this strength and energy of feeling there was joined a godly fear, a holy reverence which led the Son of God to kneel upon His knees and fall upon His face in the presence of His Father.³

We contrast our prayers with His in this respect and feel confounded. But whilst we ask whether it is not impossible for us to feel that High Presence as He did, we should also ask whether we are taking pains to make our prayers more real. Certain helps at least should be used. We can prepare ourselves for

¹ Heb. v. 7. ² St. Luke xi. 1. ³ St. Luke xxii. 41.

prayer; do as David did—"set it in order" before we call for the fire of God.¹ We can make an act of the Presence of God before we begin, and then so arrange our subjects of prayer and their order that we may have some clear idea as to what we intend. Then, again, we may adopt certain forms for the different parts of our prayers, kneeling or standing, as the case may be. We may, in fact, look upon Prayer not as a mere duty which is pleasing to God, but as a hard piece of work to be prepared for and entered upon with all that serious earnestness which a difficult task demands; and, therefore, because it is hard, choose such times for prayer as may best enable us to fulfil its conditions. It is by definite and well-sustained effort along the lines indicated in the Lord's Prayer that we shall learn the language of prayer; learn, that is, how to address ourselves to the Living God our Father. No foreign tongue is easy; and though our citizenship is in heaven and we ought, therefore, to have some familiarity with its language, we need long and careful training before we can express ourselves in any way as we should wish. But in this we shall find great assistance in the Collects of our Prayer Book. Not only is their opening always solemn, but it constantly indicates the character of the Petition that is to follow; so, for example, we call upon God as the Creator and Preserver of all mankind when we are about to ask for those things that are needed for all sorts and conditions of men.

¹ Ps. v. 3.

We are thus taught with abundance of illustration as to what we mean by making an act of faith in the Presence of God.

Still, with all the helps provided, and exercising as much diligence as we may, there yet remain such a coldness and formality about our prayers that we might well despair of progress were it not for one thought—that which gave the great Apostle such consolation—that of the help which the Holy Ghost gives in prayer. He "helpeth our infirmities," making "intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." He not only prompts us what to say and shapes our prayers, but when we seem able to say nothing, frames our silence into gracious and efficacious prayers.¹

We now pass on to notice our Lord's Example in "Times for Prayer." We need not repeat, what we have said, that His life was a life of prayer. His eternal oneness with the Father, which was never broken, assures us of that. And when the *sense* of it was mysteriously withdrawn during those three terrible hours of darkness on Good Friday, He still prayed. It might, then, be thought surprising that we should speak of "times" for prayer with Him whose life was all prayer. But the expression is justified by the Gospels, which bring before us certain occasions which seem to demand from Him special prayer. Such, for example, was that great crisis in the history of the infant Church when our Lord was

¹ Rom. viii. 26.

about to ask of His Apostles what their eighteen months' training had led them to believe concerning His Person. On their reply to His question, "Whom say ye that I am?" the future of the Church seemed to depend. It is not unnatural to learn that it was asked after Prayer.¹ So, again, when He was about to choose the Twelve, He spent the whole night in prayer to God.² So, also, after a time of outward excitement, when the crowds, miraculously fed, surged about Him desiring to carry Him off and make Him King, "He departed into a mountain Himself alone,"³ the purpose doubtless being prayer. So, again, when the last great temptation is upon Him, when the final struggle begins, He gives Himself up to prayer.⁴ And, again, on the Cross, when He is at death's door, His last spoken words are those of prayer.⁵

Do not these occasions suggest similar times for prayer for ourselves?

With us there come certain crises in the life of our parish when its faith and devotion are to be tested by some demand. We look forward to them with some anxiety, we wish they were well over, we long for tact and wisdom that we may make a right decision, we pray for help; but do we pray for our people as well as for ourselves, that they may be enabled to rise to the height which the occasion demands? So,

¹ St. Luke ix. 18.

² St. Luke vi. 12.

³ St. John vi. 15.

⁴ St. Luke xxii. 41.

⁵ St. Luke xxiii. 46.

too, we continually "have to make choice of fit persons" for the sacred rite of Confirmation. On it much depends. Do we pray long and earnestly that it may be rightly made? So, too, we have our days of success as well as disappointment. On one or two rare occasions a speech, address, or sermon may carry us on the top of a great wave of popularity. It will be well then, if, remembering the Great Example, we are found lying low at the foot of the Cross of shame, recognizing in the peril of success that the Cross alone can be our boast. We need say nothing, perhaps, about the necessity of prayer in temptation. In it lies our only hope of escape; but it may be useful to remember that His temptation did not cease the very moment He prayed, and that the characteristics of His Prayer at that time, so far as they are known to us, were brevity and repetition.

Thus much for the occasions of some of our Lord's Prayers. One word about the hour He found most suitable for prayer. There can be no doubt about this. "In the morning," so we are told, "rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed."^{*} "We are at no loss," writes the Rev. Daniel Moore, in a beautiful passage in his "Aids to Prayer," "for one reason—for this: the early morning was the only time which He could properly call His own. And even this men gave Him unwillingly; for, as we learn from the next words, before His holy soul could

^{*} St. Mark i. 35.

breathe out all its fulness He was interrupted. The people in the house followed after Him, saying, 'All men seek Thee.' And the liability to be interrupted in sacred exercises belongs to us also. Let our early hour for devotion pass, let sleep or some worldly call thrust itself between us and it, and how hard we find that hour to recover! Indeed, with the majority of mankind, we know such recovery is simply and absolutely impossible. . . . Let us endeavor, therefore, to be early with our devotions. Nothing but physical infirmity or urgent necessity should be suffered to hinder us from giving to God the day's strength and prime and best. Everything favors us at that season. It is the Sabbath of the day. The first hour of the day is the 'Lord's hour,' even as the first day of the week is the 'Lord's day.' And the understanding is clear at that time, and the heart unruffled, and the spirit buoyant, whilst the sweet silence which pervades all outward things is as if heaven and earth were holding in their breath that they might hear God's children pray."

It is through our devotion to set and fixed times for prayer that we maintain the spirit of prayer and gradually approach the Apostle's rule of praying without ceasing. "Some of us," writes Charles Spurgeon, "could honestly say that we are seldom a quarter of an hour without speaking to God, and that not as a duty, but as an instinct." Such are led to pray about everything. With one of the Provosts of

Worcester it was a rule never to open his letters without prayer, and Frederick Maurice felt that prayer before newspaper reading would be as suitable as prayer before meals. In such ways we learn practically that our "citizenship is in heaven," and that we can only safely and wisely look at things here from that lofty point of view.

And this leads us naturally to the thought of subjects of prayer. What light does our Lord's example throw upon this? Both His practice and His model Prayer show us how large a space belongs to Intercession. His Practice was almost exclusively that of advocacy in behalf of others. "He began His work of intercession for us here upon earth." And the Prayer He gave us shows the same unselfish devotion. Out of six petitions the first three concern the interests of others. Now, the teaching of His example in this respect is emphasized in the case of the Priest who is called to be not only a steward, but a watchman pledged to diligence in prayers. Such an one must, with his spiritual eye, take in the sweep of the whole horizon of God. Remembering the Apostolic injunction, "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men," he endeavors to obey it not only by short, ejaculatory prayers, but by definite petitions for such things as he knows they most need. And finding the necessity of some order in so great and comprehensive a work, he welcomes that of Morning and Evening Prayer which provides a short but beautiful

office in which his intercessions are not only ordered, but quickened by the reading of God's Word and the praising of His Holy Name. So he is enabled "with diminished responsibilities to discharge daily that work of intercession which God awaits at his hands, on which depends the destiny of souls, and for which he must most solemnly give account hereafter."¹

(3) *Self-consecration.*

The study of Scripture for the personal knowledge of the living Lord, prayer for the abiding grace of unction, and self-consecration for the love of souls. It is this last power that we now consider.

And, first, its relation to the love of souls. This pastoral affection, which is an altogether different thing from interest in the affairs of our people, which so nearly resembles the love of a parent for his offspring that the Scripture speaks of those who have it as "fathers," and those to whom they bear it as their "sons,"² does not spring up fully formed on the day of Ordination. It is a plant of steady though somewhat slow growth, and is very much affected by its surroundings. Its root lies in self-consecration; and for this reason: Self-consecration means, as we shall see, the sacrifice of certain interests which are naturally dear to us, rather for the sake of our people than for our own self-improve-

¹ Liddon, "Clerical Life and Work," p. 18.

² 1 Tim. i. 2; Titus i. 4.

ment or self-culture. "*For their sakes*" we sanctify ourselves. Now, where our treasure is there will our heart be also. Where we spend there we shall find our affections. The very effort to deny ourselves for the sake of those we serve stimulates and deepens our love. So there springs up within our hearts that love of souls which "*believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things.*"

But where shall we find this expression of the consecrated life? Nowhere so completely as in His Life whose devotion to Scripture and Prayer we have just contemplated. He it is Who speaks of certain aspects of His life as self-consecration. "*For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth.*" What were these aspects? Those summed up in the Cross. It is to this that our Lord is looking forward as He utters these words. But they are not to be confined to that supreme act of self-oblation. From the day of His circumcision, when His Blood first flowed for the redemption of the world—nay, from the moment of His birth to the day of His death—His life was marked by self-consecration. This is expressed in various ways. When a child of twelve, and surrounded by all the stimulating sights and sounds of His Father's House, there was a natural drawing towards that method of education to which our Lord was doubtless invited by the Rabbis, on whom His questioning had made so profound an impression; but it was not in that direction that the Father's hand pointed, not in that

way that He could best sanctify others. So He separated Himself from it all, turned His back upon it, and went back to the narrow, crowded home at Nazareth, that He might there learn those simple habits and duties which would give Him access to the rude, uncultured mind of the Galilean. So, too, in His education He separated Himself, we may well believe, from all other reading save that one Book which we now speak of as the Old Testament. And in His study of it His Blessed mind was ever directed to its inner teaching rather than its outward setting or its literary aspect. Again, there were burning political questions in Palestine as there are with us; one ever recurring was that of the payment of the tribute to the Cæsar; theological questions, too, such as the relative importance of the different commandments; social questions, also, such as those relating to property; ritual questions affecting certain Church traditions. Our Lord's answers on such of these points as were from time to time presented to Him showed that He was so far separated from them as to regard them as altogether subordinate to those weightier matters of love to God and love to man which in principle had a clear and sufficient interpretation in the Scriptures. Whilst we are sure that nothing that was of interest to Humanity was uninteresting to Him, yet it is clear that He moved amongst men as one who had not time to give aught but the briefest possible directions concerning the questions of the hour. Indeed, when a matter

respecting the division of an estate was laid before Him, He was severely abrupt in His manner of dealing with it. "Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" He was in the world to lay down certain great principles; the expression of them in details He left to others. The political Herodians and the worldly-minded Sadducces sneered at and hated this lofty attitude. So, too, the patriotic Pharisees and Scribes not only misunderstood, but ridiculed it. In their judgment He was a "Samaritan" rather than a "Jew," and His Kingdom a delusion rather than a living reality. So, too, whilst He taught the duty of fasting by example as well as words, and, further, "the observance of those things which they who sat in Moses' seat taught,"¹ yet He was separated from much of the ritual life of the people. His disciples treated the Sabbath with reverent freedom; neglected such points of ritual as the washing of hands before meals, and, during the earthly Ministry of their Lord, omitted fasting. This separation from certain religious habits and duties was also misunderstood. It was not that our Lord objected to the practices in themselves—some He distinctly advocated—but He feared all ritual observances which obscured their one and only justification, which was the advantage of man and the glory of God. This life of sanctification, which to the world seemed so narrow and limited, was also expressed in the outward hardness and severity of His manner of living.

¹ St. Matt. xxiii. 2.

“ From His childhood to His crucifixion He was destitute of all luxury and even of many of the comforts of life. He could say of Himself what few vagrants and tramps can affirm of themselves : ‘ The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head ’ (St. Luke ix. 58). He had neither house nor garden, vineyard nor farm. He had barely enough to supply Himself and His disciples with the necessaries of life. We know that on one occasion He and Peter did not possess between them as much as a didrachma to pay the tax. St. Paul says that Jesus Christ “ being rich, He became poor for your sake, that through His poverty you might be rich.”¹ And yet such stern severity of life, such exclusiveness in one direction, was not allowed to prevent His mixing freely with the sons of men, now dining with Simon the Pharisee and now with the wealthy Zacchæus. But enough has been said to point His example in this regard.

We are called to adopt the same principles, even though we may express them differently. Though the claim of the Father’s House is always to be first, it must at times give way to the claim of devotion to family needs ; though we must read as widely as we can, yet, as we have seen, our reading can have but one object—that of a better comprehension of the Word of God. So, too, our natural sympathies with the life of politics, art, or letters must be severely restrained, so that no one may consider that we regard

¹ Cardinal Gibbons, “The Ambassador of Christ,” p. 120.

these as our chief concern. Other men may have a reputation for gardening, for pictures, for books, but such a reputation is no compliment to the Priest, whose one aim and object is the building up of the Kingdom of God. He may indeed feel that work in these departments does not spoil his religious life, and may point to those artists and men of letters who have surpassed the clergy in religious devotion; but the question still arises as to whether those souls who are committed to his charge are as much helped in those ways as they would be by personal conference and prayer with him. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself" contains the rule he applies to all his duties. So, too, he may feel a deep interest in some political movement, but it is indeed questionable as to whether it is wise or, indeed, whether he has time, to make such a study of it as may enable him to direct it. The principle underlying it, that of love to man, he emphasizes and illustrates again and again; the power of prayer, which is to shape its course, he uses daily; but the specific direction of the question he leaves to others. Lacordaire rather lost than gained by his presence in the French Assembly, and it would seem that Savonarola's influence waned from the time that he gave political direction to the people of Florence.

So, also, the life of the body must show the same mark of consecration as the life of the mind. And here the wearing of a distinctive habit has been found useful not only in the Church of God, but in

certain Christian societies, such as those of "The Friends" and "The Salvation Army," in reminding ourselves and others that for the sake of mankind we are pledged to a life of separation. So by our Saints' Days and Holy Days, our Festivals and Fasts, we mark time with a sign of consecration; by our abstinence and self-denials we mark our life with a sign of consecration; by our devotion to God's Word we mark our study with a sign of consecration. Limited the Priest's life must be, not indeed in sympathy, in which he should surpass all men, but in the objects to which he is able to give diligent attention and in the life which devotion to his flock calls upon him to lead; but he will not allow this limitation to be a barrier between him and those he serves. Nay, it is in order to serve them the better that he allows himself to be fettered by them; therefore all those affectations of manner, speech, or dress which so easily attach themselves to those who are living by rule, he cuts off as soon as he discovers. And fearing that he may not see what all are noticing, he often asks a friend whether the difficulties he finds in awaking a response are not due to some mannerism of which he yet remains ignorant. And his devotion has his reward. The worldly Herods are often inclined to set him at naught and condemn that which he knows characterized his Master's life; the Sadducees will jest about his doctrines, as the Pharisees about his want of scrupulous punctiliousness in this or that matter; but the children clamor for his blessing, the

"publicans and harlots" seek his aid, and the common people recognizing that they have in him a constant friend, "hear him gladly." In this love of simple-hearted "Galileans" he finds his life, and when called upon to resign it, does it with a great hope that, having fought "the good fight of faith," the Master will give him the reward of the "crown of righteousness."

DEVOTIONS.

(From "*Meditations on the Life of Christ*," by Thomas a Kempis.)

I bless and give Thee thanks, O Lord Jesu Christ, Pattern of holiness, Rule of conduct, Flower of virtue, sweet Savor of Life, Perfection of patience, for all Thy virtues and sweet manners ; for Thy singular gentleness and perfect examples, openly shown before Thy disciples and all Israel ; thereby gently inviting to Thy love the hearts of the lowly.

(From Arvisenet's "*Memoriale Vitæ Sacerdotalis*."')

I know, O God, that if Thy Law be not my meditation, I shall perish in my lowliness. I know that without constant reading of it, I can be neither pious, nor wise, nor sufficiently learned. Therefore will I search Thy wonderful testimonies. I will search them daily, I will search them constantly. Daily will I draw near to this refreshment of my mind, that in it I may feed upon Thy words. There will I seek the truth and not eloquence, usefulness and not overnice subtlety. I will read religiously, I will read humbly, I will read with simplicity, I will read with faith. Grant me, O Lord, grant me understanding that I may understand Thy Word ; lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon me and teach me Thy judgments. I know that Thy

Book speaketh well; but if Thou keep silence it neither enlighteneth the understanding nor inflameth the heart.

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